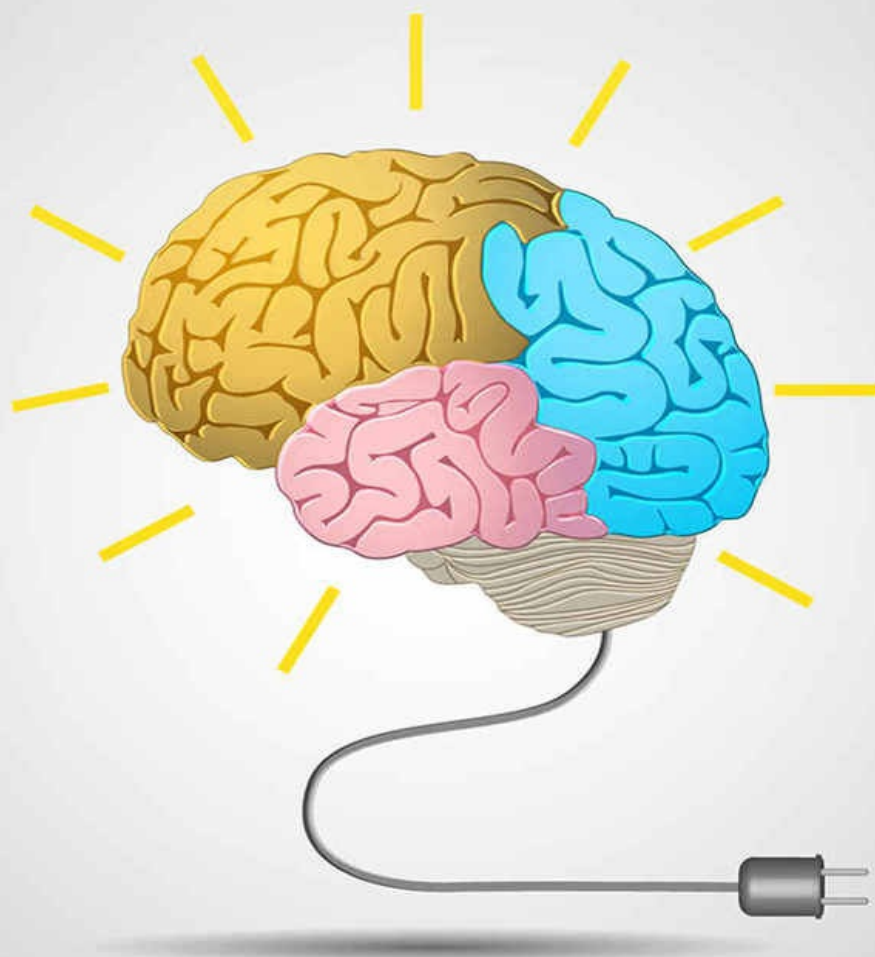


MEMORY MANIPULATION

How to Train Your Brain to Think Faster,
Concentrate More, and Remember Anything



T. WHITMORE



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Memory Manipulation

*How to Train Your Brain to Think Faster,
Concentrate More, and Remember Anything*

T. Whitmore

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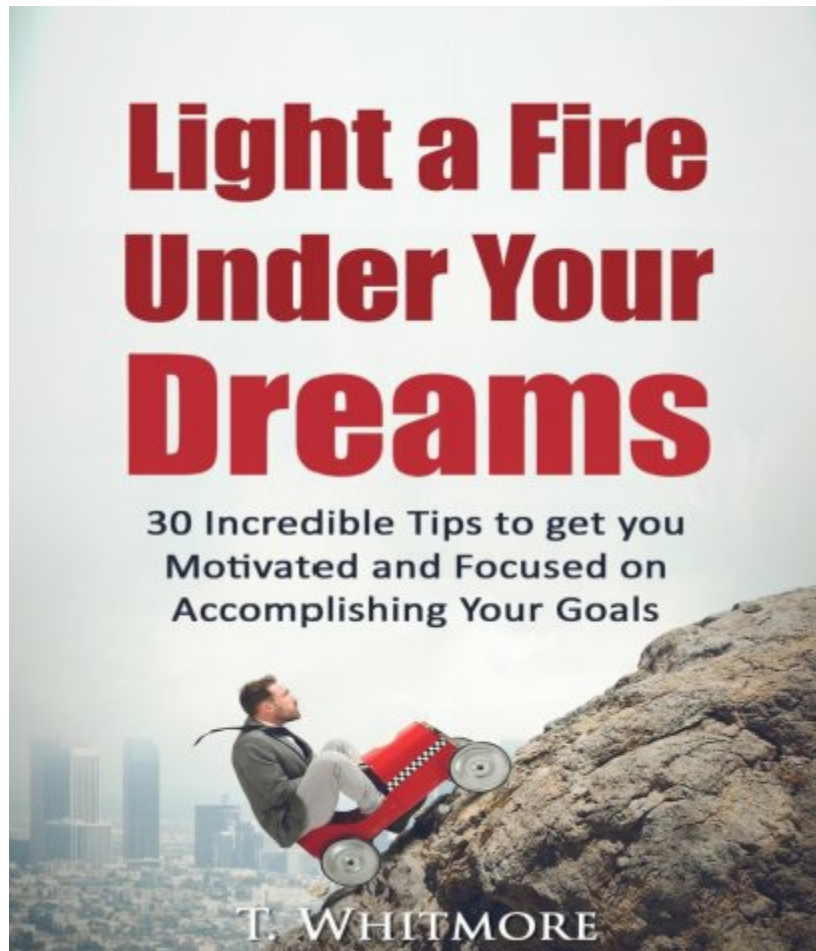
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INTRODUCTION

Before You Get Started Reading

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Do you consider yourself forgetful and would need help in improving your memory? Are you worried because you tend to forget even the simplest things?

Before you panic, what I want you to understand is forgetting things is a usual part of life. Think of your brain as a storage space and the information or memories are the files that you store in them. Our brain has the capacity to accumulate information and store it in our memory for a certain period of time. Those memories that our brain deems not-so-important will be lost, those that are important will be filed in another storage space where we can retrieve the information when we need it. There are many reasons why we forget, and I will discuss further about that later, but without our brain's ability to sort out all of the information we encode in it, our memory would be overloaded with information that we don't even need.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that being forgetful is OK, what I'm trying to point out is that forgetfulness is really a part of everyday life. Forgetting where you placed the keys, overlooking what you need to do next, and experiencing the "tip of the tongue moments" are all normal. However, if forgetfulness is already affecting your life, for example: forgetting important dates, having a hard time recalling names of your relatives, or forgetting your home address, then those are the red flags that your memory may be deteriorating.

Whether you're already in your twilight years and is already experiencing memory lapses, or you just want to improve your memory to do better in school or at work, the good thing is that you have the

ability to increase your brain's ability no matter what age you are! Several studies show that the brain has the ability called *neuroplasticity* where it can adapt to change no matter what age you are. That means, even if you start exercising your brain as an adult, your memory can still be improved; and I will show you how in this book.

Before I go on any further, I'd like to thank you and congratulate you for downloading this book, "Memory Manipulation". In this book, you will learn more than just strategies on improving the memory since I dedicated the first chapter of the book explaining the human memory and how the memory process works. There's also a chapter that will discuss the different causes of memory loss. This is important to know so that you will be able to avoid them. There is also a chapter that discusses the different lifestyle changes and even diet that you can follow to improve and strengthen your memory. Finally, there's a chapter that is the meat of this book which will discuss different techniques like *chunking*, *association*, and *mnemonics* to help improve your memory.

It's never too late or too early to improve your memory, move to the first chapter now! Happy reading!

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Chapter 1: The Human Memory Explained

For centuries, experts have been trying to figure out what the memory is, how it works, and why we forget. In the past, scientists pictured the human memory as a huge filing cabinet where information is stored and retrieved when needed. Some describe the brain as a library where memories are stored on book shelves, or even a supercomputer where a huge load of data can be stored and recovered. Recent studies show that the memory is more complicated than that. In fact, the memory is not a part of your body (like your arms, nose, eyes, lips, etc.), but is a **brain-wide process** that enables us to remember or recall information, situations, or experiences given the right stimulus. Scientists now describe the memory like a complex web of connections (known as *synapses*) that are spread all throughout the brain. These connections grow stronger over time, especially when we experience things that are related to these memories or information. Even our senses are involved in creating memories. Our memories aren't formed merely by seeing or hearing information, it involves using the different senses as well.

For example, if I were to ask you to describe your memory of Christmas mornings, how would you describe it? For me, my Christmas morning memory would involve the feeling of excitement as I tear open the wrapped gifts under the tree, it also involves smelling the delicious chocolate chip and banana pancakes my mom used to make for Christmas mornings, and it also includes the sound of the Christmas songs my father used to play on his stereo.

Our memory is more than just recalling what you reviewed the night before the exam, and it's also more than remembering the telephone number of the pizza delivery nearby. Being able to remember helps us grow and learn from our past experiences, and it also allows us to adapt to present situations. You have to understand that our memory is vital everyday living.

Do you think you could last a day without your memory? How can you drive to work from your home if you can't remember the directions? How will you be able to finish important tasks if you forget them? Or, how will you be able to learn new things at school or in the office without your memory? It's totally impossible!

That's why, it's important that you keep your memory in its top shape. Keep in mind that the brain is like a muscle, when you use it daily and exercise it, it will grow and become stronger. However, if you fail to use it, especially when you grow older, your brain turns weak, which will make learning and memorizing harder.

“There are so many reasons to train your brain and to keep it sharp as a knife. Mental health, happiness, peace of mind, and the quality of your life. You'll find continuous brain training is what sets the stage for keeping focus and memory well into old age. It seems so obvious; there's no need to explain. Because everybody knows, no train, no gain,” says brain trainer Steven L. Snyder in one of his published interviews online.

It's never too late to improve and strengthen your memory, and I will show you how on Chapter 3. First, you have to understand how the brain is able to create, store, and retrieve memory.

THE MEMORY PROCESSES

Like I said earlier, our memory is not a body part, but is a complex process. Even though our memory is complex, the process itself could be divided into three other processes—**encoding**, **storage**, and **retrieval** (also called as recall).

Encoding

Encoding is the first and most crucial process of creating a memory. It refers to the step in which an *item* (it could be an information, an experience, etc.) would be transformed by the brain into what experts call as a *construct* that would be stored and eventually retrieved from the memory.

Studies explain that we are able to encode experiences or information by perceiving it through our senses—our sense of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch. For example, when you are trying to memorize a written speech, your eyes (visual encoding) and ears (acoustic encoding) are able to encode this information to the brain. This data would then go to the part of the brain called the hippocampus, which has the responsibility of binding all these items into a single memory. After this, the memory would then travel to two other parts of the brain, which is the frontal cortex and amygdala before it is successfully stored in your memory.

Experts believe that the likelihood of information to be encoded in the brain will be based on the emotion and attention that we have during the experience. This explains why we often remember things that interest us, or caused us to be emotional.

Storage

Storage is the second process in which the new information is filtered into three different “compartments” categorized as the **sensory memory**, **short-term memory**, and **long-term memory**.

Sensory memory could be described as the compartment in which the information is stored the

shortest. It refers to our ability to retain certain data that we encoded through our senses without us paying close attention to it. For example, as you drive by an alley you see a person wearing a red shirt crossing the street. Although this experience could be stored your sensory memory, it would only be retained in the memory very briefly.

Often referred to as the “brain’s Post-it Note” the **short-term memory** is the compartment where an information can be stored around 10 to 15 seconds before the memory is lost. The short term memory for example, enables you to memorize a telephone number before typing it in your smartphone. It also allows you to recall what your boss is asking you to do before you can write it down on paper. Unfortunately, any information that our brains stores in the short-term memory could be lost unless you put a conscious effort to retain the memory, or if that information is often used.

Finally, the **long-term memory** refers to the compartment in which information is stored for a long period of time. Some even argue that even as we age, and experience frequent memory lapses, the information that are stored in the long-term memory are there to stay. Those data stored in the short-term memory can become a long term memory through a technique called consolidation that involves repetition and association of the information.

The kind of stimuli in which the information was encoded would determine on what compartment it would be stored. Without the brain’s ability to compartmentalize the experiences we encounter every day, our brain would go into an information overload.

Retrieval

This part of the memory process is when we try to access or remember the information that was successfully encoded and stored in our memory. Retrieval enables us to recall important dates such as anniversaries, birthdays, etc. It also allows us to remember names of the people that we usually encounter.

Although retrieval allows us to recall the things that are important as well as the significant events that happened to us, you have to take note that not all memories are accurate. In fact, these memories

could be altered by the current situation we are in.

Retrieval of our memory could also be difficult, especially when an old memory is replaced with a new one, or when information decays or fades overtime that causes us to forget.

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Chapter 2: Causes of Memory Loss

Like I said in the introduction, forgetting things is a usual part of life. However, even though it is inevitable to forget, it doesn't mean that you should not do anything in order to lessen it. It seems like forgetting where you placed your keys is harmless, but a usual occurrence of this could mean that you're wasting a lot of time just trying to look for them. Also, missing out on a special occasion just because you forgot about it, might also affect your relationship with other people. Even with these simple illustrations, you could clearly how important improving your memory is. But before we get into the techniques to strengthen your memory, you must first understand what causes us to forget.

Some experts believe that memories aren't lost, but instead we find it hard to retrieve the information encoded and stored in our memory. While others believe that memories decay and are lost overtime, especially when it is not important information. But whatever explanation you want to believe in, the bottom line is that forgetfulness can affect your life, and that it has quite a lot of causes; some of them are:

1. Lack of attention— Why can't you recall the person's name who was just introduced to you? One of the reasons why you can't remember his name is because you didn't pay close attention when he was introduced to you.

2.

Like I mentioned earlier, information can only be stored in the long-term memory if there was high emotion involved or if we made the conscious effort to really remember the information. Because if you lacked attention on something, this means that either your brain didn't encode anything, or it was just stored in the sensory memory.

3. Interference—Psychologists from the 1930s to the 1950s believe that one of the major causes of forgetfulness is interference. They theorized that people find it hard to recall a past memory when it is interfered with a new one or vice versa. For example, for the past year, you've been trying to learn how to speak the Japanese

language and then the following year, you decided to learn the Korean language. However, when you met individuals who spoke Japanese, you found it hard recalling the terms you learned in the past because it is already replaced or interfered with a new language that you learned.

4. **The information wasn't stored in your long-term memory—** Another reason why we sometimes forget is because some memories are only stored in the short-term memory (which can only last 10-15 seconds) rather than the long-term memory.

Was there a time when you actually had to repeat looking at an address just so you can mentally memorize it? Don't worry if you find it hard memorizing it the first time. That's just your brain deciding that this information is only good in your short-term memory and not in the long-term memory. However, with constant exercise, you will find yourself easily memorizing and remembering these things with the use of memory techniques which I will share with you later.

5. **The connections in our brain weakens—** According to the Decay Theory, the connections or what is called the synapses can weaken overtime if an information isn't often used or retrieved. When these connections decay, we will find it hard to retrieve the information making us experience what is known as the “tip of the tongue moments”.
6. **Traumatic experiences—** Even though emotions could help us store experiences and information in the long-term memory, some situations that are too extreme could lead someone to experience Dissociative Amnesia. People who undergo traumatic experiences such as natural calamities, accidents, abuse, and war can make a person forget his or her past experiences as well as some important information. This type of memory loss is serious and should be addressed with the help of an expert.
7. **Medications—** Studies show that people who are under medications such as anti-depressants, sleeping pills, and drugs to manage hypertension can experience

memory loss as well as confusion.

8. **Sleep Apnea**— This refers to a sleep disorder in which a person briefly stops breathing throughout his sleep. Although this condition is treatable, people who don't address sleep apnea could also experience memory loss, as well as dementia. A research found in the *Journal of Neuroscience* says that this condition directly affects what you call the *spatial navigation memory* that helps us to recall directions and where we placed things.
9. **Too much stress or anxiety**— Besides the physical pain you feel when you have high levels of anxiety or stress, you will also have a hard time concentrating and receiving new information. Keep in mind that in order for information to be encoded and stored in your memory, you need to pay close attention to it; stress and anxiety just make it hard for you to concentrate, and much more difficult for you to remember new information.
10. **Depression**— If left untreated, depression could directly affect a person's brain function. Not only will the individual have mood swings, lose interest in daily activities, but his/her memory will also be affected.
11. **Drinking too much alcohol**— Ever wondered why you can't remember what happened last night after you got drunk? That's because drinking too much alcohol than what is recommended (2 bottles of beer for men, 1 bottle for women) could affect a person's short-term memory. Besides that, a study from the American Academy of Neurology reported that individuals who were abusive in drinking alcohol had symptoms of cognitive decline earlier than those who were only light drinkers.
12. **Aging**—Many believe that memory lapses are always a part of growing old. Although a lot of older adults have troubles remembering things because of cognitive deterioration, it doesn't mean that it's inevitable. Like I said, you can

keep your brain and memory healthy as long as you exercise and strengthen it every day.

13. Other serious health conditions— Besides aging and the ones I mentioned above, another reason why people experience memory loss is because they could be suffering from other health conditions that affect the memory; some of these health conditions are:

- **Amnesia**— A person with this condition can experience a loss in their memory for a long period of time. There are two types of amnesia: anterograde and retrograde. An individual with an anterograde amnesia will have difficulties creating new memories, while a person with retrograde amnesia will have trouble recalling his/her existing memories. Head injuries, illnesses, as well as substance abuse are some of the causes of amnesia.
- **Dementia**— Because of the deterioration of brain cells that happens to people who have dementia, they will have problems with their short-term memory. This means that people with dementia will have difficulty in remembering what just recently happened. Besides this, symptoms such as confusion, mood swings, and difficulties in accomplishing day to day tasks will be harder for them. Statistics show that adults who are 65 and above are those who are prone to dementia; however, it could still be avoided if you keep your brain healthy and memory sharp.
- **Alzheimer's Disease**— This is the most common type of dementia that directly affects a person's memory. Unfortunately, millions of people are affected with this disease (44 million, according to Alzheimer's Disease International). People with Alzheimer's disease will have a hard time creating new memories, and eventually would also lose their long-term memories. The latter stages of this disease could also make a person find it hard to do easy tasks such as taking a bath, brushing their teeth, and even eating.

- **Korsakoff Syndrome**—Defined as a chronic memory disorder, the Korsakoff Syndrome is caused by the deficiency of thiamine in the body. A person with this disorder could suffer the same condition as a person with dementia.
- **Parkinson's Disease**— Caused by the deterioration of the neurons in a region of the brain called the substantia nigra, a person with Parkinson's Disease could have difficulty in his motor skills. Although this disease could primarily affect the patient's motor control, individuals who suffer Parkinson's Disease are also prone to developing dementia which affects their brain and memory.

Although there are quite a lot of reasons why people forget or experience memory loss, what I want you to understand is that these could be prevented or addressed if you keep your brain healthy and make sure that you exercise it daily to maintain your memory sharp; even at old age. Turn to the page to discover ways on how you can improve your memory!

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CHAPTER 3: MEMORY IMPROVEMENT TECHNIQUES

Ever wish you had a sharp memory so that you always aced the test that required you to memorize hundreds of facts and figures? Or are you tired of always forgetting things and then wasting time looking for it? Well, the good news is that you have the power to stretch your brain and improve your memory through techniques and exercising it daily.

Whether your purpose of reading this book is to improve your memory to be better at school or work, or just simply lessen your memory lapses, the memory improvement techniques that I will share with you in this chapter are proven to be effective to help sharpen your memory through constant practice.

One of the most common memory tools is *mnemonics*. These are different types of devices or techniques that will enable you to remember or recall even a huge chunk of information through lists, words, acronyms, etc. According to a study in the 1960's by Gerald R. Miller, a University professor in the US, students who often used mnemonics in learning had an impressive 77% increase in their test scores, which proves that this technique is very helpful to improve your memory.

ACRONYMS

This is the most basic technique that you can use to recall a list or a larger piece of information. By using acronyms, you just simply take the first letter of each word in the list to easily remember the information.

For example, you have to memorize the how you can treat a sprain, in order to make memorizing easier for you, just remember the acronyms letters: **RICE** which means: **R**est injured area, **I**ce the sprain, **C**ompress with a bandage, and **E**levate the injured area.

Other common examples of acronyms are: **NASA**- **N**ational **A**eronautics, and **S**pace **A**dministration, **NBA**- **N**ational **B**asketball Association, and **WHO**- **W**orld **H**ealth **O**rganization.

NAME MNEMONIC

Like the acronyms, what you need to do in order to use this technique is to take the first letters of each word in the list, but the difference is that you can re-arrange (unless you need it in order) the list to create a name that you can easily recall. Some of the best examples of this are: **Roy G. Biv** that stands for the colors of the rainbow: **R**ed, **O**range, **G**reen, **B**lue, **I**ndigo, and **V**iolet or **Pvt. Tim Hall**, that stands for the complete list of amino acids: **P**henylalanine, **V**aline, **T**hreonine, **T**ryptophan, **I**soleucine, **M**ethionine, **H**istidine, **A**rginine, **L**eucine, and **L**ysine.

Although using acronyms and name mnemonics are very helpful in remembering a number of information, they are only good for “rote learning” where you are able to recall or remember information only through repetition. But it doesn’t mean that you comprehend the context of the information that you’re trying to remember. So even if these two are very helpful, keep in mind that comprehending and understanding the information is still the best way to learn and remember.

ACROSTICS/SENTENCE MNEMONICS

Just like the first two techniques, you will also use the first letters of each word in the list. However, instead of forming a word or a name using these letters, you will use them in order to make a sentence.

For example, in order to remember the order of operations in math, which is: **P**arentheses, **E**xponents, **M**ultiply, **D**ivide, **A**dd, and **S**ubtract, you can turn its acronym **PEMDAS** into a sentence mnemonic: **P**lease **E**xcuse **M**y **D**ear **A**unt **S**ally. Or when you're trying to remember the nine planets of the solar system which is: **M**ercury, **V**enus, **E**arth, **M**ars, **J**upiter, **S**aturn, **U**ranus, **N**eptune, and **P**luto, and use the **MVEMJSUNP** acronym to: **M**y **V**ery **E**xcited **M**other **J**ust **S**erved **U**s **N**ine **P**izzas.

SONGS MNEMONICS

This is a type of mnemonic technique where you use music, or particularly the melody of a song you know well in order to memorize information. For example, some kindergarten classes in the US use the melody of the ABC song in order to sing and recite the 50 states of America. In Sunday school, they teach children the Books of the Bible Song in order to help them memorize the 27 books of the New Testament.

CHUNKING

This type of technique is ideal for recalling digits, mastering this will help you to remember telephone numbers easily.

Chunking is based on the idea that you could only keep a limited number of information in the short-term memory for a very brief period of time. According to studies, most people can memorize more or less seven numbers or items, which is very helpful, since most telephone numbers come in seven digits. *But how come do you still have a hard time memorizing phone numbers?* Maybe because you're not chunking!

Try memorizing this in 5 seconds: **8610907**

Are you able to memorize it?

What about this? **861-0907**

I'm sure that you were able to memorize the second one faster and better, that's because you "chunked" the numbers into smaller groups which is easier for you to remember.

VISUALIZATION AND ASSOCIATION

Besides mnemonics, of the best memory improvement techniques are visualization and association. That's because most people can memorize better when they visualize the information that they're trying to learn.

To use this technique, you simply have to follow three basic steps, which are: substitute words, visualize a vivid image, and lastly, associate these images together.

For example, you're trying to learn the islands in the Caribbean, however you always forget about Montserrat and its capital, Plymouth. In order to keep this in mind, you can follow the steps of the visualization and association technique.

Step 1: Substitute Words

Since Plymouth, Montserrat is a hard term to remember, what you need to do is to substitute these terms simpler words.

Take Plymouth for example, what words can you replace that are easy to remember, but sounds like Plymouth? What I can think of is for Plymouth is a fly (ply) and a mouth (mouth).

Now, what about the island, Montserrat? The only thing that I could think of is to replace Montserrat is monster rat.

Step 2: Visualize a Vivid Image

After substituting the words, the next thing you need to do is to create a clear, mental picture of it.

Now, what I can imagine is a fly with a big mouth and a humongous and scary monster rat. (The bigger and more vivid your mental image is, the better)

Step 3: Associate the Images Together

In order for you to associate Plymouth and Montserrat together, what you need to do now is to associate the two images together, or place them in one big scene. For me, the next time I have to recall what the capital of Montserrat is, I'll visualize a scary monster rat trying to catch a fly with a big mouth (Plymouth, Montserrat).

Don't be worried if you substitute words that seem odd or create a vivid image that is silly (like my example). That's because the sillier and more odd the image is in your memory, the better you can recall them.

MINDFULNESS

Finally, another technique that could help you improve your memory is practicing mindfulness. Mindfulness is defined as “the state of being conscious or aware of something”. It means that you are aware of thoughts, emotions, and the things happening around you at the present moment. Practicing mindfulness enables you to be “in the now”; far from the thoughts that take you away from what’s happening to you at the moment.

How can being “in the now” help improve memory? Like what I said in the previous chapter, the information that you want keep in your memory can only be stored if you pay close attention to it. Things that seem passive and are not repeatedly remembered will only end up in the sensory memory or the short-term memory. However, if you want important details to remain in your long-term memory, what you need to do is to be mindful—to give full attention to what you are trying to learn.

Practicing mindfulness teaches you to tame down the “noise” or different thoughts in your head that is pulling your attention from the present moment.

Having problems recalling the names of the people you just met? By being mindful when you are meeting and conversing with other people, you are able to take in all of the information presented to you without any distractions. Since your focus is there, it is more likely that these experiences will get encoded in your brain, which will help you recall the names of the people you’re talking to.

Are you always misplacing things like your keys or phone? Mindfulness will help you to remember where you placed the things that are important because you are fully aware of everything you do and the things that are happening to you at the moment.

Now that you learned some of the most effective memory techniques, I challenge you to try them yourselves. It will take some time for you to master them, but you’ll surely find them very effective

and helpful in sharpening your memory.

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CHAPTER 4: THINGS YOU CAN DO TO KEEP IMPROVING MEMORY AND PREVENT MEMORY LOSS

Besides the techniques I shared with you in the previous chapter, there are also some activities and lifestyle changes you can do in order to improve your memory and prevent memory loss.

If you want to keep your memory sharp what you need to understand is that you have to take conscious effort to train your brain to make it stronger. Like a muscle the brain can only become stronger through exercises. Even if you're already an adult, you can begin training your brain daily through different brain exercises. Some of the activities you can do are:

- **Crosswords Puzzles or Sudoku**
-

Go ahead and buy yourself a crossword puzzle or Sudoku book, or try ones that are free online. Make this a routine in order to continually stimulate your brain, and at the same time increase your know-how in general knowledge. An article from the website of the Alzheimer's Association reports that there are studies that say that keeping the brain active through activities such as crossword puzzles and Sudoku can "increase the brain's vitality and may build its reserves of brain cells and connections."

- **Test Your Memory**

If puzzles aren't your thing, maybe you can do a simple brain exercise such as trying to memorize a list and recalling it later. You can use your grocery list to do this. Try to remember the items on your list, and then after an hour, try to recall the items again. This simple activity will stimulate your brain and would help improve your memory over time.

- **Skip the Calculator**

Although it's easier to compute using a calculator on your smartphone, it would be great for your brain and memory if you challenge yourself to compute math mentally. You can even further test yourself by taking math problems and solving them “old school style”—using a pen and paper.

- **Learn a New Language**

Not only will you increase your skills, but you will also stimulate your brain, which can help strengthen the memory. In fact, a study published on sciencedaily.com, showed that people who have a rich vocabulary have lesser tendencies to experience cognitive decline when they get older.

- **Consider Enrolling in a Cooking Class**

Since the senses play a big role in encoding information and experiences to the brain, one activity you can do in order to sharpen your memory is to enroll in a cooking class since cooking involves almost all the senses such as taste, smell, touch and sight.

- **Learn to Play an Instrument**

Never think that you're old enough to learn new things. Keep in mind that as long as you live, your brain has the ability to adapt and learn new things such as playing an instrument. Again, like the other brain exercises, learning to play the guitar, for instance, will help stimulate the brain and improve memory since learning this will require using your senses such as touch and hearing.

- **Read, Read, and Read!**

Another simple activity that you can do in order to keep your brain busy is to read books, newspapers, or other references as much as you can. Reading stories help ignite your imagination which also prevents memory loss.

Besides the activities that I mentioned above, there are also some lifestyle changes you need to make in order to boost the brain's function and improve your memory. Some of these are:

- **Get Enough Sleep**

Having a busy schedule and tons of tasks that you need to accomplish could really deprive you from having a good night's sleep. However, even though you feel like you can survive with less than 5 hours of sleep, it doesn't mean that it's doing any good for your health, including your brain's function. If you want to improve your memory, then you must make sure that you have at least 7-9 hours of quality sleep every night. That's because when we're asleep, our brain is working to store information and experiences in our memory. By depriving yourself from sleep, your neurons will develop slowly making focusing and retrieving memories harder.

- **Exercise**

You're totally wrong to think that exercising is only for your physical body. Research shows that exercising, even 30 minutes to an hour everyday can help improve the brain's function. It is also believed that regular exercise can tremendously decrease the chances of developing diseases that can cause you to lose your memory. An expert from Georgetown University Medical Center said that regular physical exercise is best to preserve the brain's function and memory even with aging.

- **Learn How to Manage Stress**

Like I said earlier, anxiety and stress can cause someone to have attention difficulties and also experience memory loss. Not only that, chronic stress can also lead to depression which can again impair the memory. In order to avoid this along with the other complications that come with stress, you should learn how to manage it.

Know when you need to take a breather during a hectic day, take day offs to clear your mind from stress, and if needed, seek help from professionals.

- **Turn Away from Your Vices**

You may think that smoking can only cause damage to your lungs, but that's totally wrong. In fact, a study in a university in England showed that smokers actually lose a third of their memory daily as an effect of smoking. However, people who were able to quit smoking were able to regain the levels of their memory like those who were non-smokers.

Drinking excessively on the other hand can also impair one's memory. Alcoholism can also cause you to develop the Korsakoff Syndrome, which is a neurological disorder that has the same symptoms as with dementia.

- **Be Connected with Loved Ones**

Studies prove that individuals (especially older adults) have lesser tendencies to experience cognitive decline when they are sociable. That's because being connected with your loved ones can decrease the levels of stress and anxiety which are one of the reasons why one experiences memory loss.

- **Feed Your Brain**

Lastly, fill your diets with food that are good for the brain and memory. (I will share with you a list of brain boosting foods in the next chapter.) If possible, make it a habit to drink supplements that promotes brain health. Some of these supplements are creatine, flavanol, ginkgo biloba, and omega-3 fatty acids.

Boosting your brain's function is more than using techniques to strengthen it; it also involves mental exercises as well as good habits to help you achieve an improved memory.

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CHAPTER 5: 10 FOODS THAT IMPROVE THE MEMORY

Like I said, one of the best ways in order for you to combat forgetfulness and improve your memory is to include in your diet brain-boosting foods. The good news is that you don't even have to buy special kinds of foods in order to feed your brain. In fact, there could be some items already in your pantry that could improve your brain's health.

If you're interested in changing your meals into a more brain-healthy diet, then you might want to consider some of the brain foods listed below:

1. Berries

Strawberries, raspberries, blueberries—name it! Whatever kind of berry it maybe, including it in your diet can surely boost your brain's function. Berries are so nutritious for the brain that it is in fact considered as the no.1 brain food. That's because they contain *anthocyanins*, a compound that improves the brain's function to encode and restore memory, as well as its other cognitive functions.

2. Nuts

Having troubles memorizing your lessons for an exam? Why not consider munching on nuts which are rich in nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin E, and B complex vitamins, that are all essential for the brain's function. Walnuts in particular are found to help improve the memory, as well as prevent memory loss due to aging.

3. Avocados

Loaded with fiber, vitamins, and a good source of healthy fat, avocado is a versatile ingredient for your brain boosting meals. Not only that, this creamy fruit enables the production of dopamine, which helps improve focus and concentration, which is very important in encoding and storing memory.

4. Salmon (and other Omega-3 Fatty Acid fishes)

Fishes like salmon, mackerel, and tuna that are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids are also your best bet when it comes to brain foods.

5. Broccoli

You have to thank your mom for forcing you to eat this green vegetable when you were young. That's because broccoli is rich in minerals and vitamins such as vitamin C, B vitamins, iron, calcium, and fiber, which are all good for your brain and over-all health. It also contains a micronutrient called choline that boosts the brain's development and also improve the memory's retrieval process.

6. Spinach

Lutein, which is another type of antioxidant can be found in the green leafy vegetable, spinach. This antioxidant helps remove toxin build-up in the brain that can cause cognitive deterioration when you age.

Besides that, a study in a university in Massachusetts shows that students who consumed a healthy amount of spinach in their diet have better comprehension and have better scores than those students who didn't eat spinach.

7. Tomatoes

The next time you eat your salad, make sure you have loads of tomatoes in them. That's because tomatoes contain lycopene that keeps the brain in top shape. It also acts as an antioxidant that helps prevent cognitive deterioration.

8. Rosemary

Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet, "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance..." that's because this modest herb has properties that help eradicate the harmful free radicals in the body that can cause damage to the brain. When you include rosemary as an ingredient to your meals, it helps enhance your brain's concentration as well as memory.

9. Coconut Oil

For years, health experts have identified coconut oil to provide loads of benefits for the body, such as prevention of heart disease, improvements in immunity, weight loss, and good digestion. Besides these things, using coconut oil to cook your meals is also beneficial for the brain health because it contains medium chain triglycerides or MCTs that improves the brain cells' function.

10. Dark Chocolate

Yes! You read that right! Consuming chocolate, dark chocolate in particular, can help improve your brain's health. In fact, one study shows that older adults who drank hot chocolate had improved memory functions that lasted for hours. That's because chocolates are proven to increase a person's ability to concentrate and focus, which are all important in encoding, storing, and retrieving memory. They also contain flavanols that increases the blood

flow to the brain, which is vital for a healthy cognitive function.

Of course, even if chocolate is good for the brain you still want to consume the recommended amount of chocolate which is about a square inch per day.

Plan your meals by including these healthy foods in your diet today!

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CONCLUSION

Thank you again for downloading this book, “Memory Manipulation”.

Improving your memory is never too late or early, so it’s important that you take the chance to strengthen your brain and sharpen your memory when you can!

Although there are a lot of reasons why you forget or could experience memory loss, it doesn’t mean that you can’t do anything to improve your memory. By following the tips and techniques I shared with you in this book and by having a healthy lifestyle, you will surely have an improvement in your memory over time. Remember that the brain is like a muscle, so you always have to put it to work for it not to weaken or deteriorate.

Never underestimate what your brain can do, even if you’re old! The brain has a *neuroplasticity* ability which makes it adapt to changes no matter what age you are; so memory loss due to aging is never an excuse because learning and keeping your brain’s health in top shape is under your control!

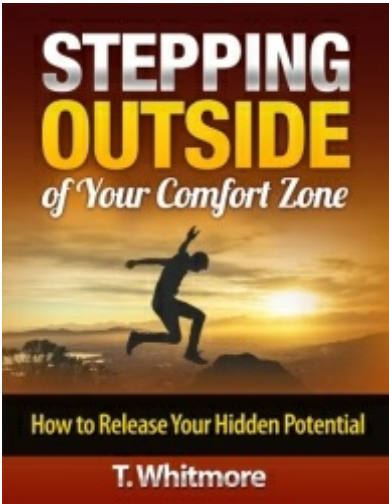
Prevent memory loss, improve your memory to ace that test, lessen those “tip of the tongue moments”, and start exercising your brain today!

Finally, if you enjoyed this book, then I’d like to ask you for a favor, would you be kind enough to leave a review for this book on Amazon? It’d be greatly appreciated!

Thank you and good luck!

Before You Go

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**Thinking Positive
Daily**
*A Guide to Personal Growth
And Self-Esteem Mastery*

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Conclusion

This book is meant to serve as a helpful guide for those people at cross-roads between surviving the past and claiming a whole new approach to life.

You see sometimes even with the most enviable family, a great career, financial freedom and great friends and relatives, without the ability to nurture a positive mindset, you find that most people still continue to live the most unfulfilled and unmotivated lifestyles.

Look around you and especially take a deeper glance at those people in your immediate circles; your friends, relatives and even co-workers. Do they seem somehow stuck regardless of how much bliss they have going on in their lives? Do you find yourself wondering why they accept how things are and move on like all is just fine. You see those hitches you found while analyzing who they really are on the inside, this could be the same outlook you project when they look at you.

A positive approach to life means that you dare to believe in good things during bad times, that you choose to be grateful for what you already have and not keep lamenting on what you still lack. It's about depending on 'you' to bring forth positive actions and feelings; that you know you have the ultimate power to make you happy and content.

In this book, not only are you going to learn how to look at the glass half full rather than half empty, but you will also learn how to accept life's limitations without surrendering to them. So if you know that life is a gift, why should you limit yourself and keep you from maximizing your potential?

Life is too short to live in a shell of negativity and limitations! Continue reading and hopefully this book is able to shine on some enormous insights on your thinking and offer a whole new positive approach to life.

Chapter 1

Developing a positive mental attitude and its benefits

Still stuck in the past?

Did you know that without your due consent, no one can make you inferior? One of the most compelling ways to increase the chances that you'll reap success is breeding a positive mental attitude. This positive approach towards life makes you much happier, and the easiest person you and other people can relate to becomes you.

So you've been through some rough patches in the past, terrible things have happened, you've been shaken and torn but that's in the past. You see you cannot afford to start living your life on automatic pilot. By embracing a positive overall mindset, you are able to change the odds and especially break the chains of emotional slavery.

What is a positive mindset?

This means choosing your reality and how things work out and affect you by maintaining a positive mindset. Ever wondered how some people despite the challenges they go through still manage to remain happy while others keep agonizing over their circumstances?

This is because one of them opted for life and its fullness and because they understand that their thinking today determines not just where they are today but where there will be tomorrow.

The power of positive thinking

Optimistic people are in a better position to handle the changes that are inevitable in life. For example most people develop severe illnesses as they age and it is those with a positive mindset that are able to face such challenges and go on living.

A positive mindset determines how it is that we deal with loss, pain or disability. Take a look at Nick Vujicic; that guy has literally had to live the most challenging life but has emerged with an inspirational story. Born without limbs, instead of looking down on his disability, he has taken the initiative to become an inspiration by living his life without limits.

The beauty of embracing a positive mental attitude is that you are able to adapt to changes and challenges that confront you and even go an extra mile of serving as an icon of inspiration. Even when the angel of death comes knocking, a person with a positive mental attitude is able to confidently soldier on and instead of leaving behind sad memories, his/her positive vibrations are able to tap on precious memories, laughter and dear reminiscence to be treasured for many, many years.

How to build a positive mindset

If you choose to adapt positive mental attitude as a way of life, it no doubt brings forth constructive changes into your life. While you may not be in the position to change your challenging situation right now with either your job, family or where you live, you can choose to approach life with positivity.

This can be achieved by challenging such negative thoughts and improving your overall outlook on life.

So how do you build a positive mindset?

1. Identifying those negative thoughts

To be able to prescribe medication, a doctor must first find the culprit. The first step towards controlling your thoughts is breeding awareness. You can try keeping a journal of the way you perceive different things. This means your work, environment, school, family, parents, friends and everything else around you. This will help you to pay attention and listen to that inner voice in your head. Awareness is where the healing begins.

2. Using positive affirmations

Words carry so much weight; we use them to build ideas, conversations and sentences in paragraphs. How much positivity do you reaffirm with the words exiting from your mouth? While the words you utter are first shaped by the thoughts that you harbor, the more you utter positive words the more positive you render your thoughts.

Make it a pursuit of wellness to commit to positive thinking by embracing positive language habits. Our choice of words says a lot about our attitude and our thought patterns. When you replace your negative words with positive ones such as “I love myself”, “I am a conqueror”, “I can do it” and

such, then you begin tapping on positive vibrations.

3. Focus on the present

Bearing in mind that everyone has problems, this perception comes in handy when practicing a positive mental attitude. Did you know that the things you worry about their happening almost never happen at all? In most cases, even if these things that worry you end up happening, they often don't end up being such mighty problems as you'd have anticipated.

The point is that if you quit worrying about tomorrow and focus on today, you can easily minimize such worries and fears that often breed negative thoughts.

4. Who are your friends?

You know the people that you choose to surround yourself with should be able to rub positive vibrations on you.

It is therefore really important that you make the conscious choice of spending time with those people who spell positivity, are supportive and who energize you.

Remember a drowning victim will not only impact negatively on you, but you can bet he'll take you down with him when his little shaky comes crumbling down.

5. Challenges? No, Talk of opportunities!

A wise person uses the bitter bricks that life throws at him and uses them to lay a firm foundation. Instead of allowing challenges and problems to get the better of you, turn them into open opportunities to make you better.

Remember what happens to you highly depends on your approach. Often, the difference there is between a dismal failure and a successful outcome is just a mild shift with your perception. How we respond to situations, particularly how we respond to challenging situations determines the ultimate outcome.

Choosing to see challenges as opportunities communicates a person with a healthy mark of self-confidence, optimism and openness not to mention an adventurous spirit.

6. Don't compare yourself with others

It's sad how most people waste precious time comparing themselves and their situations with other people. I mean why compare yourself with other people if you know there is not a single person in the world that can do a better job of being you than you can?

Comparing yourself with other people often leads you to become judgmental of you and respectively harboring negative thoughts. In comparison, there can never be a win. In fact, if you must compare

yourself, you can try using your past and present situation instead of basing the comparison on others.

Think of the sick in hospital, think of the disabled and many other less unfortunate in the society.

Instead of trying so hard to be someone else, start counting your blessings and you'll realize that there is no better person to want to emulate than yourself.

7. Know You are not Perfect

It is true everyone wants to feel in complete control of everything around them. That's a lot more like trying to be a god or goddess. While you are not perfect, it would be timely to stop pursuing perfection and simply accept that the tides will not always sail the way you govern.

Sometimes things will happen unalarmed, sometimes they will get out of control so instead of draining your energy on negative emotions, just accept that today things didn't go as planned and look out to a better dawn.

Chapter 2

Affirmations you can practice to wake up on a positive note daily

Attracting good vibrations

Feeling good about yourself will help you to attract good towards you. You see like when you wake up in the morning feeling so thankful for a new day instead of reminiscing on your problems? Confess things like “I had such a good night sleep”, “I feel great!” or “It’s sure going to be a great day for me”.

It is with every feeling, every thought that we build the energy that vibrates and radiate around us. Your most dominant vibration be it positivity or negativity attracts quite an equal share of the same from the external environment.

According to the law of attraction, you have the utmost choice to attract what you want and shun away what you don’t want and that only happens when you are in touch with surrounding vibrations.

Respectively, as you choose to consistently encourage positive, uplifting thoughts, your life greatly improves in every aspect. The trick is to opt for such thoughts that feel incredibly nice, concentrate and live them as these are the ones that help attract positive vibrations from the rest of the world.

Positive self affirmations

What are you saying about yourself? Did you know that positive statements and affirmations highly condition the subconscious mind to ultimately help develop a more positive perception of you?

Positive self affirmations are the complete opposite of a self-accusing attitude.

But what are affirmations really?

These are positive thoughts often in first person present tense with references like “me”, “myself”, “I” which when said and repeated over and over to yourself become engraved to the point that they define you. You don’t necessarily have to say them out loud; they can be a whisper, written down or you could simply allow them to linger in your mind though unspoken.

How to positive affirmations

Let’s see, where is it that you get these affirmations from? Affirmations are easy to create and practice. Affirmation should work to help you change for the better. Here’s an easy method to start creating positive personal affirmations:-

Identifying those negative beliefs

This is best done in handwriting rather than electronically. Get a pen and paper where you create two

columns right and left. On the left column, make a list of all the self-limiting statements that you've been using on yourself. Even better spend a few days listening closely to you.

What negative things are you saying about yourself? While jotting down every negative self-talk that comes to your mind, make sure you've not left out any statement no matter how insignificant it may seem.

Create affirmations from those beliefs

So you already have your list of those negative beliefs, compiling that must have been hard and harsh. The next part isn't about to be any easier as we will now be writing some new statements. While these negative beliefs have surfaced for the longest time possible, you will no doubt encounter discouragement and resistant forces, you'll probably even feel like its weird altogether. On the right side of your paper, write a new affirmation that transforms the negative one stated into a positive.

For example, a statement like "I am hopeless when it comes to love" becomes "True love is about to knock on my door, and am so ready!" Make sure the statements are in present tense and don't forget to use baby steps, even Rome wasn't made in a day.

Start practicing the new affirmations

At this point, your left hand column is already replaced with the positive affirmations, so make sure

the negative beliefs get toasted.

With just the positive affirmations at hand, designate a strategic location around the house at an area where you frequent. It could be over your kitchen's sink or above your toilet paper roll, these areas are impossible to miss on a daily basis. This helps you gain limitless access to your affirmations.

However, there is no need to dwell too much on them as they should only serve as an occasional reminder that your thinking is undergoing transformation. Whenever you catch yourself saying or thinking negative beliefs and thoughts, use these affirmations to make a turn around.

Start Living in these affirmations

Like they say, practice makes perfect. Now the most important part of this attitude transformation process is that you get to live the part. Now that you've already started practicing the affirmations, you have started believing in them, you realize how things start to change and for the better.

Eventually, the negative statements will have gradually disappeared from your mind. This is because once you start saying these positive affirmations, you start hearing them, when you start hearing them, you start believing and eventually when you believe, things start changing. In essence, if positive affirmations are going to be realized in you, you will have to be bold enough to begin now.

Affirmations you can embrace daily

In essence, self-acclaimed affirmations tend to be so absent in our lives; in our culture, our environments especially. While they may seem as just simple messages, how they can change your life is impeccably awing.

These affirmations helps in not just re-programming your thought patterns but also ultimately changing the way you approach situations and reason out. If you want to be this happy and successful person, you need to embrace a fiercely positive and motivated approach to life.

You need to get rid of those negative, self-defeating beliefs and positively program your subconscious mind. Here is a list of positive affirmations you can incorporate in your life to help make you a better person.

Affirmations when angry

- I choose to forgive myself; I am responsible for my own life.
- I choose to remain calm even when facing challenges.
- I choose to speak my mind and not allow frustrations to build up in me
- I choose to channel my anger to productivity and not self destruction.

Affirmations when afraid

- I refuse to let my courage be shaken by fear

- I choose peace and love instead of fear
- I live life courageously, I have no fear
- The future looks promising and I will be successful

Affirmations when feeling sad

- I choose to be happy under all circumstances.
- I am not allowing self-pity get in the way of my joy
- It is during my greatest solitude that I am most fruitful
- Self-pity is not an option, I choose to be happy

Affirmations when you've lost hope

- I choose to see the good in everything around me
- I refuse to give up; I am more than a conqueror
- I may not clearly understand the situation, but there's going to be a lot of good in the end.
- I am a fighter; no mountain is too high for me.

Chapter 3

Getting rid of negative people and start attracting positivity

Defining the toxic People

These are those ‘friends’, colleagues or relatives who you know does everything to make your life miserable and nothing to help build you. They tend to shun away constructive ideas, opinion and change so they remain stuck in their situations without the insight to see beyond what they are battling.

You see those people who take centre stage in your life, those people that you call your friends, have you stopped to think how it is that they impact on your life? It is true that friends are a precious gift, but the moment one of them turns toxic, then no doubt it is time to let them go.

People can be toxic in so many ways; there are those who will try to belittle your ambitions and those who will try to lead you towards destruction. However negatively someone impacts on you, the time to let them go is now! Know that great people do the complete opposite, they are the ones that make you feel great about yourself and help fuel your dreams and aspirations.

Why it is important to detox your life of negative influence

You see negativity affects not just you but everyone else around you. However, the best thing is that you always have a choice to make. If you make the decision to remain positive and back that up with action, then you start encountering positive people and situations. The people you choose to surround yourself with should be those that instead tap in positivity and growth. Here's why you need to get rid of toxicity from your life:-

- **It slows you down-** Negative people never have goals or objectives in life. They in turn discourage you from pursuing your dreams. In essence, they slow you down any way they can and before you realize it, you are sailing together with them in a miserable boat of self-pity and unfilled dreams.
- **They drain your energy-** You see that precious energy that you would have been invested into doing something constructive is instead wasted on negative, backward thinking. This negativity drains your energy so much to the point of creating stress and anxiety.
- **You miss out on great opportunities-** When negative people surround you; the possible chance that positive change will thrive is minimal, in fact very insignificant! Inwardly, their influence in your life holds you back from embracing opportunities towards success.
-

Getting rid of toxic relatives and friends

Sometimes you realize that the person bringing toxic influence to you holds an irreversible influence in terms of blood ties. It could be your mum, your sibling, your spouse or your child.

First of all, family is supposed to rule as our safe haven every time. It therefore can get really hard to accept the odds when the person bringing us the deepest heartache is someone we already treasure. So in such moments it becomes really hard to just walk away, in fact it feels like the meanest and most terrible thought. But then again while some of our relatives will build us and others toil to break us down, there's got to be that point where we draw the line. So how do you deal with toxicity from blood relatives and close friends?

a) Sometimes they are so uncaring or agonizing to you on purpose, but still you realize their way of existing forces you to compromise on your happiness and limit yourself.

In this case, it might mean spending less time with such people, loving them from a distance or ideally completely removing you from the equation when it deems unbearable.

b) There will be those who instead of openly addressing a situation, they tend to make annoying, subtle gestures directed at you. Their idea is no doubt to get you upset. When it's a family member, try making it clear that you love and respect them, they are entitled to their own opinions and ideas and that you respect.

If they care about you, they will support you and stop with the aggression but if they persist, you might need to create some space. Never should you allow anyone regardless of how closely related you happen to be in terms of blood to subject you to emotional blackmail!

c) You only hear of bullies in school, but did you know that family members can be the biggest bullies? You need to know that with a mind of your own, no one possesses the

freedom to assault or push you around. You've therefore got to have the nerve to stand up for yourself and confront these bullying minds. Remember you are your only hope of liberation in this case.

d) Keep yourself fully fueled and refuse to neglect yourself just because those people close to you do. If you find yourself in an unfortunate situation of living with a toxic person, invest quality time to rest and recuperation.

Don't allow their influence to keep you up at night thinking and questioning whether it's you doing things all wrong. They simply have issues, period! So are you going to allow them to succeed in driving you crazy?

If you realize you cannot control what they do or how they react, then make sure to take care of yourself by remaining self centered, living positively and living healthy through regular exercise, mindfulness, proper diet and prayer. Keep them agonizing on how you are able to diffuse all their venom and keep it working out for you so impeccably!

e) Incase these toxic people gets physical and you've made attempts to reconcile things, then you should already be done taking the unnecessary blows. It deems time to become the curtain raiser in this story of fate and destiny by playing the role of 'hero' in your life.

There is the law that governs humanity and you should love yourself enough to accept that until you allow such people to face the consequences of their actions, then they will only remain as impeding ghosts always in the way of the happy and more fulfilling life you deserve.

f) You can't harbor hateful feelings- You see hating a toxic relative only pulls you down to their very level. An eye for an eye will leave the entire world blind. So regardless of how unforgivable and despicable someone becomes, never allow hate to build up in your heart.

When you start hating someone it becomes you digging two sorry graves, one for the offender and one for you. In essence, the best revenge is when you choose to be the opposite of them by living well, raising your head up high and creating bliss and peace in your life.

g) Sometimes people can change- Funny enough; some people can still be repaired in the long run. You see often even after people becomes toxic and the trust that existed is broken, it is important to note that with willingness to rise above the situation, there is always hope.

All you need to do is understand that trust rises and falls over and that it takes un-waivered strength to hang on and grow together. So if there is room for dialogue and a willingness to reverse the odds from the two sides involved, then it remains an endeavor worth trying.

h) Sometimes you've got no choice but to really let go- While you cannot be in full control of how people impact on you, you can make the decision to not yield to them. With their actions and opinions constantly invading your heart and you trying to find ways to make things work, it reaches a point when enough becomes enough.

The world is not perfect and you won't be the first to let go of some long-term relationships and bounds. Don't be afraid to let go and do what feels right and what makes you happy.

By the end of the day, life is too short to keep compromising your happiness and growth for people who will never make the effort to meet you half-way the race.

Chapter 4

Letting go of emotional baggage

What is emotional baggage?

This is best defined as a negative everyday expression and approach towards life that holds on to past wrongs, disappointments and trauma. Sometimes the ghosts stem from our childhood, our upbringing or past interactions.

These past feelings and thoughts about the negative things that have happened to you in the past carries so much weight which respectively poses negative effects on your overall behavior and attitude.

Because of this emotional heaviness, you lack the zeal to seize opportunities, appreciate the good things in your life or to tap fully into your God given potential. In essence, emotional baggage limits you from living a fulfilling happy life.

Unpacking your emotional baggage

Carrying emotional baggage is like carrying a heavy load to an unknown destination. As it is, holding onto unresolved emotional feelings inside subjects your body to physical suffering and the more the

emotional baggage piles, the worse the body becomes.

You need to realize that your feelings are not who you are and make the choice to rise above them. As alive as is the fear of missing out in life, so is the fear of letting go.

You see the problem is not that you have emotional baggage, but that it has come to a point that it defines you, this makes it an issue in need of immediate action.

Take your time; it calls for baby steps

However, ditching a long-held belief isn't about to be an overnight process, it will take you longer than a week, a month even an year all because it is a life-time process.

The good news however is that, it is possible. However, the challenge lies not in getting immersed in either the pain or the joys but in keeping your heart open and not constricted and barred.

Understanding that it is in the present and not the past that you can experience happiness, love and fulfillment will help deal with the fear of letting go.

While it will be a step by step process, take your time and don't spiral to the next step until you derive satisfaction that the current step is indeed working out for you. Let someone close to you in on this journey as their presence serves as assurance that you are not alone.

How to let go with steps

So is your past impeding so much on your present and possible future it surfaces like a leach that just won't let you take a breather? Having come to terms with the fact that you need deliverance and having understood that you are your own master, here's how to release and cull out emotional baggage:-

1. Make a firm decision to let go

True, you've already come to the reality that you need to let go of your negative emotions, experiences and thoughts from the past, but the decision needs not be dependent on circumstances but infinite.

This is where you say 'enough is enough' to you and make a pact with yourself that no matter what, you are either letting go or letting go!

2. Identify the dirty culprits

You see you can't deal with something if you can't fully identify what it is. Take time to analyze your life from your childhood and other significant interactions growing up. What is this that has left you wounded, scarred and painfully hurting? What was your contribution in these interactions and what makes it so hard to forget them?

Once you are able to understand how these past relationships and interactions have negatively impacted on you, then you can identify which current issues have potential to make a similar impact and cull them out.

3. What are your current triggers?

One of the greatest reasons that past ghosts keep haunting us in the present is because we continue to tolerate potential triggers.

Something that reminds you of the past and something that has the power to provoke past feelings, memories and reactions needs to be spotted and uprooted.

4. What is your reaction or approach to such triggers?

Looking back on your life, what has been your reaction to such triggers? Like for example if your emotional baggage involves your husband's infidelity, what happens when you feel suspicious or distrustful of him?

When you are feeling neglected, controlled or mistreated by him, what is your immediate reaction? Often you realize that your immediate response is over-reaction, losing your calm and anxiety.

When you are able to identify your reaction to things that trigger your past demons, you are

able to make a turn around with them. Remember your attitude is a choice you make. So if you choose to not allow such triggers to define your mood, you help change past outcomes.

5. Get in touch with reality

Even when you are able to discern that your reaction to current situations is tied to the past, the feelings can sometimes be so intense it becomes hard to react any different.

Now it becomes important to identify with your present by facing the open reality. Use your subconscious mind to counter feelings and thoughts that are irrelevant today, that are not a reality today.

Say it's regarding your once unfaithful husband; do you have evidence of your current suspicions that he could be unfaithful? While the answer is definitely no, will you stop allowing inhibiting ghosts determine your future!

6. Start living in the present

Now you can choose how you want to live, react and approach life's situations. Go ahead and create positive affirmations to use every time you feel like the ghosts from your pasts are threatening to surface!

Make positive statements like "I will trust a lot more and not be afraid to live my life to the fullest". When you start claiming good things, positive things, they in turn starts happening.

Search your current life situation and sure you must be able to identify something positive and one that directly contradicts your past experience. Make this the silver lining in this dark

cloud and use it to soar.

Finding the good both in your past and present helps reclaim your power where you become no longer the victim but the master of your own destiny.

Chapter 5

Rising above disappointments and heartbreaks

Life is not perfect

Let's face it; life is a battlefield and not a bed of roses. Your attitude and daily approach to life's situation should be a lot more flexible and it should remain definite to anticipate failure at times. This way instead of such situations weighing you down, you will already have an escape plan.

So when life doesn't go the way you planned, how do you react to that? Do you develop a cynical outlook? Do you become absorbed in the misfortunes and set-backs that life mercilessly throws at you? Often you realize that it is every step you take towards a 'golden future' that seems to take you two more steps backwards.

How many people today are guilty of wanting a picture-perfect successful future? A loving husband, enviable kids and a to-die-for career? Sometimes you've wanted to get rich overnight and live the most comfortable life. While forgetting that life is already beautiful even without trying to perfect it or salivating for luxurious living, we forget to actually live.

Being happy just because

You don't become happy in life because things are indeed perfect, you are only happy when you are able to look beyond the imperfections. Sometimes all you need to do is to take a step back in time and re-evaluate your attitude, how is it that you perceive things around you?

Being happy just because means that instead of living from fear, you start living from faith. That instead of dwelling on self-pity, you can start practicing compassion for others. As it is, people are going to hurt you, shake you and try to break you. Where you remain after all the drama is all that matters.

Again given that disappointments and heartbreaks can really harden your heart against trust to the point of making you question the goodness there is in humanity; know that there will always be a way out. The way out is choosing to be happy just because regardless of all life's challenges. Here are 5 reasons to want to choose happiness:-

- Choosing to enjoy the moment instead of agonize becomes a habit, it becomes character, it defines you.
- Choosing to celebrate instead of mourn highly benefits your future.
- Happiness even from just a simple smile spells improved health.
- Every new day becomes a new opportunity to become better than you were yesterday.

- You start positively impacting on other people's lives.
- You become the master of your own destiny.

Overcoming disappointments and heartbreaks

Regardless of the disappointments, hardships, adversities and pain you may have suffered in the past, there is no reason to beat yourself up. The fact is that disappointments don't discriminate unless you allow them to, heartbreaks shakes you but they don't cripple.

Say you missed out on that promotion; she turned down your marriage proposal, he cheated on you with your best friend or you missed out on that defining auction. It is through tests and challenges, disappointments and heartbreaks that we are able to savor the delicious taste of victory. The most important thing to bear in mind is that getting up after a setback is not an option, it's a definite resolution.

Here's how to keep moving forward even after life has handed you some bitter lemons.

Cut yourself some slack- You see, self-blame is often the reason why you are unable to accept the outcomes in certain life situations and simply move on. Agonizing on what you did or didn't do for

things to turn out better is a complete waste of time. Just accept that it happened and move on from here.

Play the role of a spectator- This means that you avoid the drama by stepping away and shifting your attention to more positive things. This helps deal with the hard blow as you have already distanced yourself from the event. You know you might just yell out loud and say “It wasn’t me” like the events were simply playing out from a movie script.

Don’t make it personal- How about you target alternative explanations to the situation. It doesn’t have to be something you did or didn’t do; it doesn’t have to be you. Look at the situation in a broader perspective and find something else to place the blame on.

Focus on your strengths- These you must have many! Think of what you are really good at, how many other things you’ve achieved in your life, how many other things have worked out according to your expectations. You see those skills you may have gained in the past, hone them and fight to become a better person.

Positive influence- If things are going pretty rough for you right now, it only becomes worse if you choose the company of bitter, self-centered and negative minds. Think hard about who you would turn to in a desperate situation, on impulse and let this be the person you reach out to. The naysayers, let them do what they do best, live in pessimism.

Chapter 6

Getting back on your feet after a financial setback or job loss

Failure is part of life

Sometimes we are faced with the hardest decisions to make, other times we are faced with the hardest challenges to overcome. Regardless of how many blows we receive in life, we must remain positive knowing that failure is an inevitable price while trying to accomplish something.

At one point in life, we all have experienced unexpected financial disasters. It could be that you lost your job, a medical emergency or uninsured losses. In essence we must understand that it remains impossible to predict your financial journey, financial success is never guaranteed.

The Greatest Successors once failed

Even the most successful investors got to suffer financial challenges from time to time. The point therefore isn't to invent a strategy that keeps you from falling, it's having the drive to pick yourself up and start all over.

The most compelling success stories tags along some mind-blowing hustles and setbacks which were

used as foundation to success.

So are you facing financial challenges and setbacks, it feels like you have reached your dead end?

Know you are not alone and that there is hope to come out stronger than you started off.

Getting Back on Your Feet

You must have already realized that finding the motivation to rise up from failure is often easier said than done. Having beaten yourself up so often even branding yourself the ‘greatest failure of all time’, you will need more than just inspiration to resurface. You are going to need a strategic plan; you are going to need a working plan.

So regardless of what brought upon your financial setback, know that your path to recovery will require relentless dedication and a willingness to re-prosper. Your situation isn’t unique, you are not the first to walk this lane and this serves as even more conviction that you too will rise.

Here’s a six-step plan to help you recover from a financial setback:-

Accept reality- So things are what they are, stop wallowing in unnecessary despair and accept the odds. It is devastating okay, totally crushing and a complete bummer, okay! The most important thing here now is that it’s in the past, it’s done. Instead of wasting your energy resisting a futile fact, bounce from this past and start making progressive steps forward.

Take your inventory- How much is lost? Surely, there must be something you can still salvage. Take an inventory of the current situation and come to terms with the resources and the liabilities you have. You are going to need this little information when developing a come-back plan from this catastrophe.

You see in financial management, you must understand where you are today to be able to make realistic future plans. Ask yourself what assets still remains, how much money you owe, how much income is still available, how much are your expected expenses and what is your credit score as at now? Are there long-term implications such as I.R.S, alimony or health issues? All this needs to comprise your recovery plan.

Define Goals and objectives

Where do you see yourself in the future financially? After knowing where you stand and your targeted destination, now you can easily plot the course there. Make sure your goals are specific with definable end results. Again they should be measurable and attainable so you are able to measure your progress as time unfolds.

You see you cannot afford to set unrealistic goals. Such goals like setting goals of becoming a millionaire within a span of 1 year after filing for bankruptcy aren't viable. Again remember that a goal that holds no deadline remains just a wishful thought. This means that you will need to be smart enough to outline a time or date that the goals are to be met.

The Big Plan

Now with all the armor you will need, the next step is to bridge the gap there is between where you are today and where you wish to be in future. While you are not superhuman, you must respect your emotions along the way because remember no one said it will be an easy road.

Now you will need to figure out the most efficient path that gets you from point A to point B with fewer hassles while not forgetting to ensure that it's rewarding and fun all through.

Take action

You see without consistent action, your goals remains void and null. Action however is what converts your goals into tangible results. This is there you repackage your experience, knowledge and skills towards accomplishing your purpose.

Correction and adjustment

You've already fallen down, picked yourself up and shaken off the dust. You've learnt from past mistakes so it's quite unlikely there will be a repeat of the same. While a wise person knows that perfection is impossible, he knows too that correction is desirable and timely.

Often, you realize that your first plan isn't always your best plan so don't even waste your effort

trying to stick to plan A to the latter. Adjusting your approach along the way helps achieve your goals more efficiently and effectively.

Chapter 7

Fun activities to help boost and get you back on track

Relaxation and Fun

It is true that positive thinking in itself won't cure cancer or help reduce your weight. However, positive thinking makes it easier to reduce stress, better manage your life and take care of you.

Making time to get you engaged in enjoyable activities, reason being that they are relaxing or because they are fun and absorbing is really important. While it's easy to get buried in life's challenges or get overly focused on work, most people tend to overlook the need for fun and relaxation along the way.

Fun and positive thinking

Being gloomy all the time is not a healthy approach. Like they say "Too much work and no play makes Jack a dull boy". You therefore need to understand that to boost your positive thinking; you need to make time to unwind, letting go of your worries and cares.

Engaging in something fun and relaxing is a key aspect in helping cultivate not just positivity but also resilience, stamina and energy; a combination you are going to need when you are facing challenges

or setbacks in life.

Fun and Relaxing activities to try

Making the choice to engage yourself in fun and relaxing activities gets you openly claiming that “Life is good”. Why? It is because you are finding something enjoyable to look forward to and this helps replace negative motives with positive ones.

While some fun and relaxation options that works for someone else may not necessarily work out for you, you will need to find that something that gets your happiness flowing.

Regardless of what this activity is, it doesn't really matter much as long as it is able to enhance positive results overall for both your body and mind.

Here are fun and relaxation activities you can embrace to help boost your vitality:-

Meditation

This is a relaxation and fun technique that offers a soothing effect that inherently brings awareness and

relaxation. As an easy activity that requires only a few minutes of your time, you should know that people who constantly engage in meditation display more positive emotions not to mention are able to lead a purposeful life.

Writing

You don't know how magical a pen and paper and the comfort of your couch can get when it comes to unwinding. You know those positive experiences you've had, why not take time to write about them.

Let go and just get immersed in the moment. Writing on positive experiences helps override any possible negative thinking and also acts as a reminder that there is still so much good in this world.

Listen to music

Amidst all those challenges and setbacks in life, dare to look back and get nostalgic with archived music. You must have heard the statement that music is food for the soul too often you already believe it.

Studies have shown that not only is music able to prompt brain changes linked to our emotions but it also abstract decision making. While everyone has their own set of music, make time to indulge in a good listen once in a while.

Exercise

The revitalizing and relaxation benefits that exercise accords are hard to ignore. In respect to a more positive attitude, exercise helps boost your energy while amazingly improving your mood too. So, at times when you feel in need of emotional uplifting, why not take a walk or hit the gym?

Charity work

Being in a position to help someone in need helps bring out the best in you. It could be a friend, relative, neighbor or a complete stranger that needs help.

Again, volunteering to work in a retirement or children's home brings forth a new approach to life. Instead of sulking in your misery, you are able to find more than a 1000 reasons to smile and keep going regardless of the blows that life throws at you.

Other ways to relax and have fun includes:-

- Taking a hike
- Getting a good massage treatment
- Working on a puzzle
- Watching inspirational documentaries
- Cooking – Trying out new recipes

- Engaging in intimacy (safe) with your partner

Chapter 8

Why laughing remains the best medicine

A laugh goes a long way

Have you ever heard of someone who went to the doctor seeking treatment for stress and the doctor prescribed more laughter? Well, you better believe it!

There is no telling how far a laugh can go, from bringing people closer together to establishing amazing connections. Everything can take a complete turnaround from just a slight giggle or guffaw.

A heated argument or chilly unfamiliarity can be easily diffused by a hearty, deep laugh. So are you feeling completely run down, why not try laughing a lot more than you did before?

A Medical Approach

The laughter therapy details that you are able to change psychologically when you laugh. Through laughter, you are able to stretch muscles throughout your body, face not to mention that your pulse and blood pressure goes up. Laughter can serve as a mild work out and offers some advantages that a physical workout brings.

While laughter is also said to help burn out calories, it doesn't mean that you ditch your diet plan or stop exercising. It is a combination of laughter and relentless efforts to be better including exercise that counts.

Laughter as your best medicine

Someone is asking out loud how come laughter is said to be the best medicine. That is no doubt understandable but, are you ready to listen to facts on laughter and positive living?

Laughter is first associated with comic relief and it's impossible to not have tapped into the mood-boosting benefits of a good laugh at one point in life. While humor is infectious, roaring laughter is a lot more contagious than a snuffle, cough or sneeze.

Laughter if shared especially increases intimacy and happiness and helps bind people together. The best part in regard to benefits brought upon by laughter is that it is free of charge.

Physical health benefits of laughter

- Laughter helps relax your muscles
- Laughter also boosts your immune system
- It goes a long way to help boost your immunity
- Helps prevent heart disease
- Lowers the stress hormones

Mental health benefits of laughter

- Adds zest and oomph to life
- Improves your overall mood
- Works amazingly to enhance resilience
- Helps ease fear and anxiety

Social benefits of laughter

- Helps strengthen relationships
- Helps attract good vibrations from others
- Laughter enhances team work and cooperation
- Laughter works well in diffusing conflicts and disagreements

How to bring more laughter and humor into your life

Sure you've experienced the joy of playing with a furry friend or a pet at one point in your life.

Laughter is an open gift, so natural and inborn. Have you never wondered how infants begin to smile right from the moment they come into this world?

Even though you never got the chance to grow up in a household where laughter surfaced, you must have learnt the joy of laughter at a later age. Eventually, you are able to naturally incorporate laughter

in everything else that you do. However, in case it gets challenging, here's how to go about it:-

Smile- Whenever you spot something even mildly pleasing, take the rare chance and smile!

Counting your blessings- They must be a handful! Considering the good things happening around you distance you from negative thoughts.

Move towards laughter and humor- Often times, people are happy to share something humorous no matter how ancient for the very reason that it gives them a chance to laugh again. When you hear laughter, seek to know what's that funny reason as to why the laughter and indulge yourself.

Spending time with funny people- There are those people that laugh easily sometimes at themselves, other times at life's absurdities. While their playful view of laughter can be contagious, surround yourself with such people.

Cultivate humor- No; you don't have to be Mr. Bean to be able to crack a joke. Cultivating a joke can be as easy as seeking to find out funny things that have happened around other people, and there, you can easily find something to laugh about.

Chapter 9

The power of Exercise towards clearing and renewing your mind

The Inevitable Hassles

You see there are those days that you simply find yourself going off-course. The workload is unbearable with calls and emails streaming in, with constant interruptions disrupting your actions and your thought process, the pace can deem frenetic.

With the speed you are moving at, you are bound to feel sloppy and unproductive leaving you edgy and stressed out. Many are the times you'll end up feeling like you missed out on something, like you've somehow lost touch with a certain part of your life.

You know like you go shopping for everything you have in the house only to realize that you've gone a little bit over the top with your budget when you get to your house. This frenzy shouldn't be left to escalate so much to the point that the only thing you do when you get home is yelling at the dog and snapping at your kids. It is therefore important to find a way to stay under control during such frantic moments,

Mind De-clutter

If you've gotten familiar with computer terminologies, then you must have heard of Random Access Memory (RAM). This is the storage in a computer that determines the processing capacity of a computer. It so happens that the more applications your computer runs the more RAM it utilizes and the slower it gets. Surprisingly, the same case applies to your brain. Well, have you ever heard of brain de-cluttering? This means clearing your mind of all the 'garbage' that inhibits your peace and laxity. In addition to your daily responsibilities, you still have to face the demands of pending errands, upcoming holidays, and unbearable moods with your boss not to mention having to cope with negative thoughts building up from life's frustrations.

With so much that needs your attention, it is only normal for your mind to go into overdrive with all the worries and endless commitments. Regardless of life's hardships, one thing that remains constant is that life goes on. The best give you can give you is taking quality time to clear your mind. You neither has to spend so much time on this as just 10 minutes a day are enough to help reboot your brain and recharge your energy.

You see when you decide to stop worrying, ruminating and planning too much and simply empty all that suffocation baggage from your mind; then you begin to live. It is now that you realize how much you've allowed yourself to live in limitation, it is now that you are able to prove yourself as much wiser than your problems.

Positive thinking, positive attitude, positive actions, positive resolutions, positive living! Each one of these goes hand in hand with the other.

Exercise and Relaxation

Apart from meditation and writing, physical activity is another incredible way to help clear your mind and reclaim your energy. True you might figure that having been running up and down in the office and around the house is already enough to get your blood pumping.

However, without forgetting that such work and house routines are the main culprits as to why you are feeling beat, it would be senseless to consider any form of walking within these parameters as healthy.

Separating yourself from the causative action and away from the immediate chaos helps your mind tune into a new environment. Exercise comes in uncontested as one of the most defining ways to help clear your mind.

Look at it this way; how comes you tend to think so much better when you exercise or take a walk? You see not only does exercise enhance your cognition due to improved blood flow, research also shows that the critical part of the brain involved with the learning and memory is most active during exercise.

Again, exercise has repeatedly been cited to be a cure for inexhaustible health conditions today ranging from diabetes, depression, Alzheimer's disease, memory loss, blood pressure and more. Respectively, when it comes to sleeping better, exercise works incredibly amazing on your brain to facilitate good sleep so you can now say goodbye to sleepless nights when you engage in exercise and

physical activity.

What kind of exercise?

Now you already know that you don't have to wait for those feel-good feelings to come by accident as you can bring them to life by exercising. It doesn't have to be just the physical; you can also try mind exercises too. Here are exercises both mind-oriented and physical that you can incorporate in your day to day schedule to garner an overall healthy and positive mindset:-

Mind Exercises

- **Meditation** -This can be termed as a brain exercise that works by calming the nerves. Through meditation, you are able to focus on a single thing and with practice; you end up being able to pull your thoughts back every time they start to wander off.
- **Cooking lessons**- The decision to learn how to cook a foreign cuisine works incredibly fine. You see cooking uses a number of senses including smell, sight, touch and taste which are a great boost for the brain to maintain healthy functionality.
- **Music**- This simply says it all. You could try taking music lessons on a particular musical instrument. A piano has such a relaxing and mind blowing impact not to mention that being able to make music solely from your brain is a great way to relax and unwind.

- **Breathing exercises-** Breathing falls a lot more on meditation but on its own, the ability to master individual breathing techniques brings forth open-minded clarity that tags along transcendence.

Physical Exercises

- **Walking-** This is one of the safest and easiest physical exercise that anyone can try. A 30 minute's walk a day helps boost stamina while also lowering blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes risks.
- **Running-** This exercise while adhered to in moderation helps boost your heart rate and improve your bone health. Today there are many open arenas to try out this sport and if done as part of a group or with a friend, the derived results are exemplary.
- **Swimming-** This is a low-cost workout that helps pamper the whole body while improving flexibility too. However, don't forget to use sunscreen if swimming outdoors.
- **Dancing-** Another readily available type of exercise to consider. Dancing to such music trends as Jazz, Hip-hop and Latin American music can be a great way to exercise not to mention are incredibly fun too.

Chapter 10

Spiritual nourishment for a positive attitude

Daily discipline

Ideally, life goes more smoothly and is more fulfilling when we embrace a positive mindset. How great would it be if you would make it your unaltered initiative that before going to sleep you get to consider what was right and wrong on that day and use this to improve yourself?

On this note, you realize that the decision to elevate your mind remains definite. One of the ways you can achieve this mind elevation target is appropriating for emotional, mental, physical and spiritual needs on a daily basis.

Such small actions you overlook daily are the ones that greatly impact on your health, productivity and happiness. The commitment to nourish these critical domains in your life could lead to you to finding purpose and passion in life while making you a better person overall.

Here are five major disciplines which if incorporated in your day-to-day activities will help highly elevate your state of mind:-

1. **Practice gratitude-** Nothing compels positivity better than a grateful soul. Make it a habit to write a gratitude list each passing day. This not only helps boost positive thinking but also helps look forward to better days ahead.
2. **Keep yourself active-** Ideally, if you want to remain at your best, exercise cannot be a luxury. Not only does it help nourish your cognition but it also helps slow cellular aging too. Knowing how much further exercise can impact on your overall wellness makes it a daily disciplinary call of action.
3. **Eating healthy-** Lest we forget that what we eat is what we become. Nurturing your body through healthy eating helps nurture your life too. This ensures that you bask in vitality and energy in abundance. Again a healthy body posture also boosts your overall self-esteem and confidence respectively welcoming positivity and bliss into your life.
4. **Embrace integrity-** This means you choose to live in alignment with good morals, values and character. Practicing integrity living ensures that by the end of the day, you are able to trust and respect people not forgetting boost your overall self-esteem. Everything else that follows only spells positivity and good living!
5. **Spiritual nourishment-** We all need to have spiritual nurturing to be able to remain inspired and resilient. Take some time therefore on a daily basis to nourish your spirit. This may be through prayer, meditation, yoga or through any other means that tallies with your spiritual belief.

Being thankful at all times

Sure you've heard this phrase a lot especially from the spiritual books. That you should be grateful for the simplest things, no matter how insignificant they may seem. You shouldn't wait for life to indulge you in practical lessons to start appreciating life.

If you are to keep yourself happy, you need to start doing what is right for your spirit. Start by assessing your relationships, career and spirituality and pinpoint where you could be feeling dissatisfied and why. Follow that up with working on what needs to be done to regain balance and facilitate the motivation needed by you to make changes. This will help nourish those domains that are starved for attention while fostering the overall personal environment necessary for your life to thrive.

How do you feed your spirit?

Doing what you love

It would definitely be great to have a career that is simply aligned with your passion and ultimate goals. While we can't always have this satisfaction, it's important to pursue a career that leaves you in a happier mood even though not necessarily perfect!

That means if you are unhappy with your job, don't wait for that to bring you at a battle field with

negative emotions. Instead, do some soul searching and know what it is that appeals to you with no limitations then make every effort to pursue that vision wholeheartedly.

Prayer

Pray and not just for you but for someone else too. You see prayer means seeking guidance and favor from the supernatural God, the one that is above all in majesty and power. Surrendering your entire self to God and letting known your needs and supplications, helps unburden your soul and recharge your body.

The aspect of believing also goes a long way because as the Bible says, if we pray and believe then it's done! The beauty there is in prayer is that we are able to let go of emotional burdens and find new strength to start all over. Prayer remains a key aspect in spiritual nourishment.

Practicing Appreciation

Many are the times that something good happens in life and we end up perceiving it as norm. In fact, many are the times that we miss the chance to be grateful for the good things in life and instead find ourselves agonizing in the negatives and disappointing part of life. However, if you learn to see life as a gift, then you will learn to appreciate those simple things like having a roof over your head or a plate of food on your table.

The power of intuition

Ever heard someone confess of a wary feeling just before something bad happened? Many are the times that we dismiss our intuition and interpret it as simple fear or anxiety. Needless to say, being able to listen and act on your intuition helps you avoid unnecessary and unpleasant hassles.

That means if something doesn't feel right to you, make it an ultimatum to avoid it regardless of how much others advocate for it. Remember your life is just yours to live and the responsibilities from your actions will never be shared!

Chapter 11

Positive thinking and your self esteem

Working on your Self Image

What does your outlook say about you? Does it outline someone who knows their self-worth? Someone who walks with their head held up high? Someone who isn't afraid to explore their options? Someone who is not afraid of failure but is rather afraid of not trying? You must know that self worth isn't self-absorption; it is rather relentless self-respect.

Self confidence is vital and is applicable in almost every aspect in all our lives. Sadly, most people still struggle so much to nail it and this greatly inhibits their success. You see when you have confidence; you tend to inspire the same in others.

However, if you are going to accomplish a positive self-image, it will have to start by pursuing positive affirmations about you. So again, what are you really saying about yourself? Are you branding yourself as incompetent, shy and a slow learner? Well, that is exactly what you become. Remember that you tend to reap what you sow!

Never put yourself down

There will always be those self-accusing voices in your head. Those that say you are not good enough, that you don't fit in and that you are destined to fail. However, how your life turns out is not dependent on these negative accusations; it is dependent on what your subconscious mind says about you.

In the light of day, when you are thinking sane and are saying things out loud, listen carefully to what you are saying. Make sure that every word you are firmly upholding is a diamond that shines over all those accusing voices in your head. Learn to engage yourself in positive self-dialogue.

Remind yourself everyday of the potential and integrity you possess. If you make it a point to feed on a positive mental diet, then your character and personality sync in positive vibrations too.

Whenever you hit the road, make sure to walk with your head held up high. Not with a conceited attitude though but with self-pride that comes from knowing your worth.

Confidence from positive thinking

Often, it is such negative thoughts and negative self affirmations that cripple your self confidence. No one is to say how long it will take you to reclaim back your self-esteem but what remains constant, is that the journey towards that achievement must start now!

There are many ways to change self-criticism and negative thoughts. However, focusing on all of

them at once may deem harsh and overwhelming.

The best approach therefore is to tackle them one at a time, working on each individually and assessing the outcomes regularly. As they say, practice makes perfect so make it a habit to observe regular practice through thought replacement.

Where you'd be inclined to make a negative statement or self-affirmation, replace the same with a positive ultimatum. Make sure to mean what you say, make sure to own up to every counter statement you use on your negative thinking.

Self Confidence is a Necessity

Self confidence comes in handy especially in most potentially difficulty situations such as making a speech, asking someone out on a date, playing a competitive sport, socializing on unfamiliar grounds or speaking up in a crowd.

The good news is that by thinking realistically about a certain situation, regarding you on a positive light and using simple anxiety management techniques can help boost your confidence.

Confidence is often a blend of both self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self esteemed is more related to holding a belief that we are good enough and deserving to live a happy life. Self efficacy on the other hand is the internal belief, or sense that we are able to accomplish various goals and tasks we face in

our lives.

Each one of these goes with the other. Someone who has self-confidence thinks positively about the present and the future while on the other hand someone who lacks confidence carries a negative perspective in regard to his / her potential and future hopes and dreams.

Tips on improving your self esteem

Luckily, while you may not possess that admirable self-confidence that leaves you assured of tomorrow, you can always improve on it. Here are tips that you can use to help boost your overall self-confidence:-

1. Stop listening to your inner critic, in fact, stand up to this inner voice gagging up any destructive thoughts.
2. Motivate yourself positively. This means when that inner voice screams just how sloppy you are, counter that accusation with an affirmative action that spells how meticulous you are.
3. Learn to self-appreciate yourself. There's sure got to be something about you to be proud

of. Like how you are may be able to make people laugh, how thoughtful you can be or how well you are able to impact on other people. These positive assurances help neutralize negative mood and in the long-run works towards building self-esteem.

4. Write your attributes down. By the end of the day, take time to reflect on you and outline those things that makes you appreciate you. The best thing about writing down these attributes is that even after weeks have passed, you can read them again and again to the point they become affirmed.
5. Doing the right thing greatly help raise your self esteem. An action as simple as getting up from your comfort zone at the couch and hitting the gym or choosing to understand a certain situation other than being judgmental is a plus.
6. Quit trying to be perfect, no one has ever been! Perfectionism is a great culprit of low self-esteem. It can paralyze your ability to live life to the fullest. The procrastination you have leaves you afraid of failing, of not living up to your set standards and this makes your self-esteem sink with quite a pace.
7. Accept that mistakes and failure are part of live. That along the way you will stumble and fall and that it's normal, that it's okay. The secret is to ensure that you remain your own best friend through thick and thin.
8. Be kind to others. How you treat others is often how you treat yourself and how they

possibly treat you in return. If you practice more patience and kindness with others, this becomes a bold realization of positivity and in return you reap the same in double portions

Chapter 12

Passing on positive vibes to others

Our Daily Interactions

On a daily basis, we interact with different people. Some impacts positively on us while others negatively. Our concern however is how to tap into positivity. You see positive vibes can easily be picked up from those around us, the immediate environment and even from animals.

However, you need emotional quotient to be able to grasp these vibes and inherently absorb them. EQ (Emotional quotient) is thereby your ability to process emotional details most especially those involving assimilation, understanding and perception.

Have you never met someone whom though a complete stranger at the moment, deep down you cannot deny the fact that you already do like them? That they being in your life add cheer, you like their company so much and you keep looking forward to hanging out with them?

Training Your Mind to Recognize Good Vibes

These people who appeal to you just by mere intuition, these are the people who make you smile regardless, they add zeal to your life, they are the ones who emit positive vibes.

Here's how you can train your mind to recognize these good vibrations from other people:-

1. **A genuine smile-** From just looking at a genuine smile from someone, you'll be able to tap on the same and ultimately fill your heart with happiness.
2. **Eye contact-** When a person smiles at you, make eye contact with them. Eyes are able to emit respective vibes whether positive or negative. Depending on your EQ, you will be able to define the perceived vibrations.
3. **The tone of the voice** –You should know that this carries a vibe too so listen carefully to how they speak and the tone they use.
4. **Body language** -While listening to their words and paying close attention to even their body language, you'll be able to pick up the vibes, the positive ones.

Positive Vibes vs. Negative Vibes

The first thing you need to understand is that you have a choice every time. Whether to be at peace with yourself or to be in resistance is your choice.

Coherently, you tend to attract positive energy when you are at peace and create negative vibes when in resistance. While it's a just a simple choice, most people still choose to sail in negativity.

The truth is that, regardless of how many setbacks and challenges we face, how we perceive them is what determines our respective attitude. It is not your boss, the traffic, parents or colleagues but your very perception that creates negative energy and stress.

While circumstances are neutral, you tend to generate positive vibes if your inner self is in congruence instead of being resistive.

How to Attract Positive Energy

Remember that we are magnets. Every time we emit positive energy in terms of feelings, vibrations and thoughts, we attract more positivity to us.

Respectively, when we dwell in the negatives, we attract negatives that work awfully by sapping our strength and energy in the process too.

If you really want to attract wellness, vitality and health to yourself, you must stop circulating toxic, thoughts and feelings.

Here are 8 ways in which you can attract positive energy into your life:-

1. **Choose to start your day with meditation-** The art of meditation helps you create a sound awareness with your surroundings.

All you need to do is just relax and allow yourself to feel your consciousness in the midst of emotions and thoughts. Meditation always has such impacting power in helping create positive vibes all day long.

2. **Love yourself enough-** This means that despite your flaws, you learn to love and accept the person you are and keep reminding yourself of those great qualities you possess.
3. **Forgive your past failures and disappointments** – The person you were yesterday can only make you a better person today. You will therefore need to stop engaging in guilt and self blame from past happenings. Decide that today is the first day of the rest of your blissful life and revel in it.
4. **Stop controlling others** – Know you will never be at peace if you remain self-consumed and selfish. You need to let go of your insatiable need to control. Every time you try to control a life's situation, you end up feeling frustrated respectively generating negative emotions.

If life is more like a raging fire in itself, what purpose does it serve to struggle putting it off? Instead, find ways to let go and allow yourself to surface. This way you will not only attract the gracious incentives of life but you will also attract and retain positive energy.

5. **Envision a Peaceful life-** While your mind might already be addicted to negative

thinking, you will need unmonitored motivation to break out and start attracting positive energy.

Stay alert and conscious and you'll witness your mind churning out fearful emotions, stress and anxiety. You will be surprised how intensely positive vibrations will flow.

6. **Tomorrow isn't promised** – You will need to stop worrying about the future because like they say, tomorrow isn't promised, not for anyone! You achieve absolutely nothing by worrying; in fact, your worrying becomes a complete waste of precious time.

Just incorporate practical planning and leave the rest to fate and destiny because no matter how much you try to fight, whatever that has to happen will happen. When you stop worrying you cull out negative emotions and leave room for positive vibes to thrive.

7. **Laughter is food for the soul**- Don't just laugh, keep laughing and don't stop! Indulge in activities that provoke humor such as watching funny movies or sharing jokes. This way, you will be laughing your way back to healthy living by shunning negative thoughts and embracing positive vibes.
8. **Bask in the wonders of nature**- You see nature has a way of awakening such positive vibrations you never knew existed. Sit down for a moment and envision yourself watching the sunset, sitting by the ocean or hiking in nature.

Can you already feel the peace and assurance that comes from such moments? Taking time to get immersed into the wonders of nature helps quiet your mind and body. This way not only do you get to tap into positive vibes; you also find a way to connect with a deeper part of

yourself you never had the chance to explore before.

Conclusion

Thank you so much for downloading this book.

I hope the content herein has managed to serve as enlightenment towards positive thinking. I hope through the tips and in-depth information provided in this book, you will manage to garner a more positive approach to life.

Remember there is nothing as compelling as being able to positively impact on another. On that note, if indeed the book has been helpful to you, please do not forget to extend the bliss. It would be sad if someone close to you missed the chance to benefit from the content in this book as much as you have.

Thanks again and good luck in everything!

T.I.M.E

Things I Must Experience

***How to Manage Your Time More
Effectively So You Can Do
More of What You Love***

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Introduction

Do you remember the story about the ants and the grasshopper? It describes a grasshopper that sang all the way through the summer, while the ants were gathering food for the winter. When the winter cold reached the forest, the grasshopper had nothing to eat and had to beg the ants for food. The ants told it to sing the winter away.

It's a very old story with several interpretations, but we tell it to our kids to teach them how planning and time management affect our future and our productivity. It's a simple concept that describes how the actions we take in the present influence the outcome of our goals.

As we grow older, we like to indulge and treat ourselves to the little pleasures of life, like eating candy for breakfast or before lunch, using all our free time to play video games or stay up late and watch TV. As time passes by, these little pleasures can take over our life, without us noticing or recognizing them as real threats. They become our habits and start to dictate our life. When a deadline pops up, we don't think of the time we wasted ineffectively. We only wish the day lasted longer.

Why you need to be organized to be creative

Many people hide behind the theory of creative chaos and how it leads to great achievements. But if you care enough to research the theory, you will find out that it doesn't apply to your everyday life. It applies to a universal structure of a pattern much greater than what your mind can perceive and imagine, so what seems like a disorganized and chaotic pattern now, is actually a great plan that will unfold sometime in the future.

In your every day, human existence chaos is just what it is – a state of utter disorder and confusion, leading only to more chaos. Let's put the theory in practice. Your desk is flooded with papers, documents, pens, erasers, and maybe even the book you read is peaking underneath some week old newspaper. If a coworker calls and asks for a document, you start looking for it on your desk, inside your drawers, and end up printing it out, just to avoid going through the mess. You didn't take the time to create different folders on your internet browser, to keep different types of bookmarks organized, so you try to think of the sites' names and search it through your history. Your email is another story. Luckily, now you can just type a keyword in the search box and all emails with the keyword will appear. But there were times when you could look for a certain message for over an hour. Searching for a file on the computer is a quest for the most courageous and those with free time on their hands.

All this chaos only creates stress and headaches. At the time, you may convince yourself that you are in control of your time and space, and that you have everything you need handy and where you can see it. If you summarize, you will realize that you spend an hour every day looking for stuff. That's at least 5 hours each week. Don't forget that these habits rub off on your personal life. You do the same in your kitchen, closet, hallway and we all know you have a chair designed to hold all the clothes you changed throughout the day, or week. Paying bills, scheduling appointments and organizing activities for your free time is also done at the last possible moment. No wonder you

have no time.

As human beings, we tend to excel in finding and creating patterns. If our nature was designed differently, the ancient man would've extinct long ago. We don't live in caves anymore and we don't hunt wild animals for food, but our contemporary lifestyles awarded us with modern problems. Nowadays, if you keep your environment cluttered and you let time pass by without taking the effort to manage it effectively, you will upset the equilibrium between your personal and professional life. This equilibrium must remain balanced. Otherwise you are risking stress related diseases, professional failures and a number of limitations in your personal life. So if you have a pattern of letting the chips fall where they may, maybe it's time to change it and learn a new one. One where you are in charge and in control of your time, and your life.

Planning is Key: Keep Lists and Use the Tools at your Disposal

A wise man once said that the plan is nothing, but planning is everything. We all have big plans about something. It's a great way to gain some perspective of your life's objectives. But what many of us don't realize is that you need to determine the path of the plan, otherwise it may become a pretty picture to look at, something forgotten in the back of your mind.

Keeping lists is the best way to stay on the right track. The path to a certain goal may seem clear at the time, but suddenly you see yourself in the middle of the plan, jam-packed with paperwork, additional work and people asking you questions, that require time and further effort on your part. All these obstacles can give you headaches and distract you from your goal.

Start making lists. Not just to-do lists – all types of lists. Your diary is a type of list keeping habit, so is the grocery list on your refrigerator. You know how handy your diary is when you are trying to remember when the last fight with your friend was, so let's show you different types of lists, so you can decide which will become your lifesaver:

Shopping Lists – these are necessary in every household. You will want to write down everything you need to buy the moment you take the last out of the refrigerator. Have a board in your kitchen, to pin stickers on, or keep them in a pile on the fridge itself. In time, you will know which products you need to buy weekly and which are your monthly purchases. You can make tables on the computer, containing the products you buy weekly, and just add the new products under the weekly ones.

Another stressful and time-consuming hassle we often encounter is gift shopping. Christmas, mother's day, father's day, you name it.

Who's to say you can't plan gifts in advance. Keep your notebook handy in case you come across something you think someone if your life might like. You may not remember all the gift ideas you've bumped into throughout the year, so when a big event like New Year's or a birthday comes along, you can just take your notebook out and use it as a cheat sheet.

Check Lists – these types of lists are convenient when you have to arrive prepared to a meeting or event. Stress can often make you forget, so keep a record of the essential things you need for a certain interaction or occasion. Let's say you have a presentation. Your list should include all the things you need to make it successful. These things may include:

- Copies of the project's outline
- Model of the product
- Laptop, slides, projector and etc.
- Spare battery or a power cable
- Pens: red, blue, black
- Lucky charm

Resource Lists – if you find a source of information to be statistically accurate and in accordance to your requirements, keep it categorized. We live in the new century, so take advantage of the tools at our disposal. You can create several folders in your browser, all titled differently (e.g. recipes, news, fun, movies and etc.) so you can speed up the search when you most need it.

Many browsers have the option to create several users. You can name one "Work", for when you're working; another one titled "Home", for when you're surfing for fun; and of course, you can open a different user for each person in your household that uses the same computer, so your browsing history and analytics don't intersect.

It will be of great benefit if you open a Google email account just for work. That way, when your boss needs a log of your working activities or asks a question about the source of the information, you can just log in to your account and search for the sources you used. If you are the boss, ask all your employees to use the email address you provided, so you can keep track of their performance.

List Of Ideas – we come up with ideas throughout the whole day, but usually remember one or two, or none, in some cases.

There are many times when you encounter a situation that inspires you to try a different course of action. Sometimes it may be an idea to check out some detail from a different perspective, or the word you were looking for just popped up in your head when you were washing your hands in the toilet. Write this little stuff in a notebook and look over the list daily.

Money Lists – this is a tough one, especially if you lack organizational skills. Keeping a list, where all your expenses will be recorded, will give you a sound evidence of where your money goes. To do this successfully, keep the receipts of everything you buy. If you forgot your receipt, write the item down on your phone or a notebook. At the end of the month, when you calculate the totals, you will see how much you spend on food, bills, leisure and taxes. In time, you will learn what is necessary and what can be left out. These types of lists shift the focus on the big picture and will give you an idea where and how you can cut back.

Lists for goals – these are the most complex lists and call for special attention. You will need to go over each separately, and calculate the time and means you will need to achieve them. Having a goal and building a plan to get to it, will motivate you and activate all your capabilities. Without one, you may end up squandering your efforts and time, to build someone else's dreams and achievements.

According to the Zeigarnik Effect, human beings tend to remember the stuff they didn't do more than the stuff they already completed. That's why it will be best to keep a notebook ready in your phone or purse, for both the stuff you already did and the details you believe you might forget later. The first one will help you to keep track of your achieved goals. As the Zeigarnik effect implies, we often forget

the tasks we finished, so it will be a nice reminder of everything you've completed throughout the day or week. Some days are so busy, you are not sure if your head is still on your shoulders, yet you feel like you haven't accomplished anything. Keep your finished tasks listed and you'll be surprised how much work you are actually capable of.

Many tools are available if you only make the effort to plan ahead. From the old-school pen and notebook record keeping, to advanced mobile applications to make your life a lot easier. There is even a specially designed device for making lists and keeping contacts on the go, called a personal digital assistant or PDA. Nowadays it's not very popular, because mobile phones are capable of supporting much more advanced applications.

Today's applications and virtual assistants have many options. You can assign different colors to each type of task in the calendar, so you can find them without having to read each. For example, assign red for meetings, green for events, blue for making phone calls or sending emails. The application might be capable of grouping different types of tasks by priority, category or date. Most have the option to remind you before a task and you can assign the actual time when the application will remind you, e.g. 3 hours before the deadline, a day, a week and etc. Best of all, today's devices have access to the internet, so don't forget to use Google Drive, Dropbox and similar platforms to store and share files, documents and photos whenever you need to.

It will be smart to make all types of lists and use several types of assistants. Download a virtual assistant for your to-do lists throughout the day and tasks related to the job. Have a notebook in your purse or pocket for the small things you come up with during the day. Put up a board next to your fridge and keep track of the spent items. Use the recording option on your phone to list the things you can't write down at the moment. We don't count those few seconds while we write something down, but when the time comes, you will realize that you saved valuable time, a time you can spend enjoying your life more.

Set Goals and Deadlines

Neurologists and psychologists agree that setting goals makes the brain consider the set objective as a reality. This means that once you set your mind on something, it has no other choice than to lead you to the goal. Often times, these goals remain far out of our reach because we fail to plan and get organized. We end up tense, because our mind is confused. We presented it with one reality, but we ended up not living it. The easier and more obvious the path to the goal is, the more nervous and anxious our brain gets. Because we are not following its directions and signs.

The S.M.A.R.T. Goals

There are basic guidelines you can follow to make sure you set the right goals. Achieved goals are like narcotic drugs for the brain. When they are not yet achieved, it releases stress hormones, to provide your body with a burst of energy and keep you alert and focused. When you achieve the goal, it releases dopamine and other nurturing hormones that make you feel naturally high. Follow the SMART criteria:

Specific – are your goals specific enough to be easily achieved? Ask yourself three questions: what, why and how. What is your goal, why you need to achieve it and how can you achieve it. If your goal is to learn to manage your time, you need to learn to manage it, so you can have a more rewarding personal life and you will achieve it when you work out a plan to save a precious hour every day. Your goals have to be specific; otherwise you will not be able to make a rough idea or an outline to get to it.

Measurable – are your goals measurable? Ask yourself how many and how much. How will you know if the goal is achieved? If your

goal is to save some time throughout the day, ask yourself how many free hours you need in a day. How many minutes are you wasting while standing in line, going up and down to different floors or talking at the water cooler. How many minutes can you save, if you make your own coffee instead waiting for a cup in coffee shops and etc.

Attainable/Assignable – is your goal attainable or assignable? Can you do it by yourself or do you need to assign it to someone to help you? Do you believe others will agree to work according to your agenda? If your idea is to save time by giving your tasks to someone else, you may be setting yourself to disappointment, because your coworkers may not agree to do your job or do a mediocre one, which makes this plan un-attainable and un-assignable.

Realistic – are your goals realistic? Do you believe you can achieve your objectives or are they just wishes? Is there a conceivable path to your goal? Can you count the steps to your goal? Do you realistically believe you are capable of taking every step on the way, regardless of how steep?

Time bound – can your goal be measured in time? How many days you will need to get to the finish line? How many hours of work will it get you to finish the project? Don't set your goals for "sometime in the future". Instead, set a perceptible deadline, so you can keep track of your undertaking.

Outlining your dreams with words, with written instruction of how to get to them, is the difference between a dream and a goal. You will have to stop thinking narrowly and brainstorm ideas. Don't decide on the definite course of action just yet. Take a couple of days, with your pen and paper ready and think how you can become more organized. Sometimes, it just so happens that we set too many goals at the same time, so we end up doing none successfully. Focus on the quality instead of the quantity. Focus on the little things, the details. If you work in customer services, for example, and your job is to write to users about the company's services, it will be time consuming to write the same emails all day long. Instead, take an hour and work on a couple of templates. That way, when a client asks for information or reports a problem, you will have a courtesy letter prepared and all you'll need to do is focus on the problem the client is

having and addresses it.

Avoid multitasking unless you have mastered it. Trying to complete several tasks at once may hamper productivity. Test your skills and try to perform several chores at once. If you are headed in a direction where later you'll also need to make copies and talk to a coworker, by all means, do it. It will save you time. But in other cases, where important tasks are at stake, it will be better to focus and concentrate. You may think you can do it all, and you probably can, but you have to take into account external obstacles, like changes in directions or coworkers dropping by or asking for help.

Follow your own direction. For a plan to work, it needs to be thorough. You need to plan and calculate each step. That way you can estimate a possible completion date and feel good about the goal before the actual deadline. Let's say you want a promotion at work, and you give yourself 3 months to get it. Here's what you can write down:

Lisa's Promotion Plan

Daily tasks:

- Be nice to coworkers
- Help out
- Don't whine
- Don't complain
- Don't gossip
- Be prepared

- Come in half an hour early
- Stay half an hour late
- Get noticed by the boss and coworkers

Weekly tasks:

- Finish tasks before deadline
- Present your results
- Do more than you are asked
 - Mention related accomplishments to boss – sell yourself
 - be dynamic at meeting

Monthly tasks:

- Learn a new program, or skill
- Ask for more duties
- Be a team player
- Brainstorm different approach, ideas, tips

At last, don't talk about your goals and plans to anyone. You can never predict other people's response and reactions, which may hinder your feelings and motivation. Stay quiet and positive. Be flexible about your plans. Remain alert and with both hands on your plans. If something goes wrong unexpectedly, review the steps that led to the failure. Maybe there was a flaw in your plan you overlooked or miscalculated. There's always something you can do to repair the route to the goal, as they say: if there's will there's a way.

Prioritize Work That Is ‘Important but Not Urgent

So you’ve written down your plans. Now what? Most people will choose the easiest task to complete first, to feel good and accomplished. Picking the easiest way out is called the path of least resistance. Mark Twain said if you eat a frog in the morning, that’s the hardest thing you’ll do all day. Once you complete the hardest, most complex of your tasks for the day, the rest will be easy.

Which task is most difficult or unpleasant? Is there a task that will take most of your time? Can you split it in several smaller tasks, or do you need to do it all at once? Imagine you have only one closet, for both your summer and winter clothes. Every spring you have to pack the winter clothes in bags and take out the summer clothes.

If you take out the winter clothes and the summer clothes on the bed to refold or wash them, you’ll have a huge pile of clothes in your bedroom. You’ll never know where to start and you’ll probably waste a lot of time sorting things out. But if you take the winter clothes out of the closet first, fold them and place them in bags, and only then fold and sort the summer clothes to place them in the closet, you’ve done it right.

The tasks that make the project are the same: sorting, folding, packing. But the order in which you complete them makes all the difference. In the first case you take the path of least resistance: taking all clothes out on the bed to avoid wasting time sorting them and folding them at the moment. When everything is a mess, you sort and fold anyway. Only now you waste time on other details, like cleaning after yourself and making sure the right shirt is in the right pile.

You have to be methodical and think strategically. When you decide you need time management in your life, you will probably want to change your pattern in several areas at once. You can do it even though it may seem overwhelming, and it will be for the best too. If you focus on your career too much, you may undermine the bonds in your private relationships. Prioritize your plans. Use Stephen Covey's system:

- **Important and Urgent**
- **Important and Not Urgent**
- **Not Important but Urgent**
- **Not Important and Not Urgent**

This system will help you decide the plan or path to your goals, the steps and their order. In Lisa's example, important and urgent goals were to come in early and stay in later, get noticed by the boss and coworkers and finish tasks before the deadline. Important but not urgent were: be dynamic at meetings, present results, learning a program and etc. Sit down and think of a strategy that will work best. If there are too many chores in one category, examine them exclusively and focus on the timetable for each.

Another way you can weigh the importance of your goals is by deciding which will be pursued monthly, early, by the end of 2 years, 5 years, 10 years and etc. When you give yourself a deadline, it's important to not wait for the last possible moment to act on it. Split your big plans into smaller and smaller parts. Let's take Lisa's example again. Even though the "learning a program" goal was in the monthly list, she can still list "buying it and installing it" in her weekly list. She can try to find tutorials in the meantime and join forums to research the options, pros and cons of the program. She can learn about a better program and offer a solution when her boss complains about their current program, and complete 2 goals of the plan: get noticed and brainstorm ideas. Sometimes it's better to make several smaller steps instead of one big one, because regardless of how small they are, they will still take you to your goal.

Utilize a different system to prioritize your tasks. List them under: tedious, less tedious, bearable and done in a minute. Eat the frog early

in the morning and the rest of the day will be easy to manage. Your old train of thought might lead you to believe that the highly important tasks should be done last, after you complete all other small activities. But most of the time, these small activities can wear you down and leave you no energy for the other chores. When you are done with the big stuff, regardless of how exhausted you are, the fact that you have only small errands left, will be the boost you needed.

Ring-Fence Your Most Creative Time

Scheduling the right time for each task will define the outcome of your plans. You know yourself best and you are familiar with the ups and downs you experience throughout the day, whether in mood or energy. There are two types of people: morning people and evening people. Most morning people wake up without touching the snooze button. They are peppy up until lunch time, when you can notice the first signs of exhaustion. Evening people are merely useless in the morning, especially the first few hours of the day, but once they get the ball rolling, no one can stop them. People from both groups are capable of finishing the same tasks in the same given time.

According to Rose Zacks and Mareike Wieth, and their study, creative work and brainstorming are best done when people are not at their peak energy levels. So if you are a morning person, it will be best to complete the chores that require more energy and concentration early, then focus on the intellectual, artistic and emotional aspects of the job later in the day. For evening people, it's the opposite. They will feel more productive, quietly planning strategies and brainstorming ideas in the morning, and work on the demanding tasks later.

It's not an exact science, at least not for everyone, so you'll have to monitor your activities to understand better when the right time for each activity is. You will find out that your blood pressure drops after a big meal and you feel a burst of energy an hour after a workout. Your diet may also alter your energy levels, so it will be best to snack on carbohydrates around lunch time, so your body can receive new energy for the rest of the day. Avoid carbohydrates before bed, because your body won't be able to use them as energy and will store them as fat.

Consider distractions and interruptions in the equation. When is your working space most cluttered and busy? When are coworkers likely

to come in unannounced? When your brain is in an alert state, in its peak period, distractions and interruptions are easily processed and filtered. When you are tired however, your concentration and focus can be easily influenced. Chose the time of the day when you can focus without much effort. We have three periods in the day of around 90 minutes each, when our brain is capable of following a train of thought without losing concentration. That's more than 4 hours every day for the most demanding chores.

Not many people understand this body rhythm of ours, and want to do all challenging tasks at once. The brain has its own rhythm and it works in cycles. Beta and gamma waves are the impulses that steer our brains to think, learn, memorize and focus. However, the brain can't keep these waves dominant for a very long time, or it will become overstimulated, exhausted, and stressed. So instead of working 4 hours straight on the demanding parts of the job, thinking you will take full advantage of your brain capacity, follow its natural cycles.

Your brain will send signals when it's time to relax, by giving you a headache or recurrent distracting thoughts.

It will be pointless to go against this natural rhythm, because you can't change it. You can influence it with stimulants like coffee or drugs, but when they wear off, the slow and relaxing waves will take over again, making you even more tired. Use this natural rhythm to your advantage. Theta waves, for example, are valuable impulses that stir creativity, intuition and emotional connections. When the alpha waves hit the brain, you are most capable of problem solving, thinking outside the box, summarizing and visualization.

Make a plan to go over an important task during a gamma or beta brainwave state, a chore that requires concentration, numbers and handling large amounts of information at once. You have less than two hours until your brain starts sending signals that it can no longer concentrate, which means the theta waves took over the cognitive processes. Now it will be a good time to use your right brain hemisphere for creative work, intuitive matters in question, or tap into the spiritual states of the mind. Alpha waves are mostly used for distressing and relaxation, and scientists discovered that just by closing your eyes for a few minutes, your brain will start generating them.

Avoid the ‘Sisyphus Effect’ Of Endless To-Do Lists

So you’ve decided what you need to work on and the lists got a little overwhelming. So overwhelming in fact, that you lost all the motivation to get started. You wonder how are you going to do this and where are you going to find the time. This happens very often and it happens to all of us. When you first start making plans, you calculate the time and effort you need for each task. At the moment they don’t seem farfetched and overwhelming, because you examine them individually, but put together in one gigantically long list they seem impossible. Relax and take another look at your notes.

When you have 15 things written down for one day, it’s pretty easy to get terrified by the amount of responsibilities and duties. You don’t need to be because there are probably 5 things you can scratch off as unimportant. Scratch those things off, keep the original and rewrite your to-do list. Now you’ll be left with 10 tasks. 10 tasks in 8 working hours don’t seem overpowering, but then you remember that coworkers will be loud, or ask you for help or direction, or chat by your desk. Maybe your boss or client will want to talk in the middle of your power-hours and you realize that your to-do list is still a little cluttered.

It seems like there’s no way out of your busy schedule, but there is. Make a new note for tomorrow tasks and write down only 5 tasks. Again, think of the type of person you are and the type of activities you are capable of performing fast and accurately, with distractions and under pressure. Do those things when you are at your peak, when the day starts, when everyone is looking over their objectives for the day, asking for assistance or agreeing on a directive. When you are done with these 5 tasks, you can look over the 10 task to-do list. Choose the ones that can be completed immediately or that are moderately urgent. Pick those tasks that can be performed in a single effort, or in the same location. Suddenly you’ll realize that you are thinking of completing tasks from your spare lists. It should give you the satisfaction that you are ahead of your schedule, instead of behind.

Get Things Done by Putting Them off Till Tomorrow

Everyone always says tomorrow is not promised to us, and that we shouldn't do tomorrow what we can do today. But when your schedule is packed full with activities, tomorrow seems like a perfect day. At least for some activities. That's actually the secret to a better time management. You have to make a list of all the tasks you are capable of finishing, prioritize them, and perform them according to their urgency. When the time comes for the easiest duties or those that can be postponed – put them in tomorrow's to-do list.

That's the difference between promising to do something tomorrow and postponing it until tomorrow. When you are putting stuff off for tomorrow, you are making a plan to do them. Something will be missing if you don't do them and you won't feel accomplished. Write down all the chores you have to postpone, keep that list separate and jump on those errands the first chance you get. That should be your priority. If you postpone 4 out of 5 tasks every day, it's no longer putting off, it's procrastination.

These tasks should be something minor, something that wouldn't crook your path. Big, important tasks cannot be put off, even if they are overwhelming. In that case, you can split your works in several days, but never postpone it. Experts make a difference between active procrastination and laziness. When you are actively procrastinating, you are not just postponing stuff for later. You are going through your other tasks and looking for the next one to cross of the list. You are still actively working on a plan, only delaying the unimportant and non-urgent tasks

Postpone the small stuff. If there's a task in your tomorrow's list that can wait until the next day, assign it with a question mark. When

coworkers ask you for assistance, ask if the call is urgent. Learn to say no. An email pops up and you see it's not urgent, reschedule the reply. Unless you work alone and have no one to keep updated, chances are great that your working hours are filled with distractions, unexpected and additional chores. Learn to identify their urgency the minute they are assigned.

It's all about the flexibility of your job and your character. Study your environment, your coworkers, and the dynamics at play. Avoid the rush-hours in the working place. If Friday is a busy day for the copier, copy your papers on Thursday. If accountants work full steam ahead on Mondays, pick another day to ask for advice. Discover a system where you can avoid most distractions and make things come about without pushing them hard.

There's the right time for everything and being able to put things off for later is a proof of that. You are never given more than you can handle, and if you think you are, it's only to get you to see the situation from another angle. To teach you to be more organized and work under pressure. If someone's telling you their job is sunshine and rainbows, they are probably not doing it right.

Get Things off Your Mind

Now, this is a tricky one. Getting things off your mind is a little easier said than done. You know how sometimes you get that one song stuck in your mind all day. It starts with a few lines in the back of your mind. Then you start singing along and realize you are singing along, so you stop. It gets a little boring and annoying hearing the same song for hours, but you also can't get rid of the echoing melody. Our brains are powerful machines that can carry out complex processes, yet they tend to get stuck on the same lyrics or tunes all day. Next time you can't stop singing a song, try finishing it. That's how your brain works – it needs to finish the given task or it will remind you about it until you finish it. It becomes a broken record that will keep singing the same tunes until you lend it a helping hand, and help it move on. Once the train of thought gets going, it has to reach its final destination. So, give it a chance.

The working place is usually full of distractions, and focusing requires tremendous effort. When you need to finish a certain task without distracting thoughts and people messing up your process, you have to build your environment in a way that it doesn't allow interferences. Put up your schedule where everyone can see it. Put your visiting hours in there. A time of the day when coworkers can ask for stuff and a time when they absolutely can't. If you don't have the freedom to schedule such hours, use other means. Download alpha brain waves (binaural) beat, and put on your headphones. Log off of any social platforms, minimize the unnecessary windows and set your phone to silent.

Deal with distracting thoughts the same way you can deal with the repeating tunes. Let them in, examine them, allow them to take their course and let them out. If you keep blocking them without trying to resolve their occurrence, they are just going to come back in.

Sometimes, thoughts are not easily controlled, and it seems like our minds have a mind of their own. In that case, ask yourself a couple of questions that can help the distracting thoughts move along faster: Is this more important? Is it the end of the world if I don't think about

this right now? These are my working hours, what am I doing, thinking about my cat?!” Rationalize your thoughts and they will lose their meaning. Close your eyes for a minute and focus again.

Review Your Commitments

We always neglect our New Year's resolutions because we forget about them soon after the holidays. The same can happen when you don't pay attention to your plans and tasks that make them. Review your commitments every morning, every Saturday, every 1st of the month. Review all your plans and goals: your dream boards, your working schedule, your free time plans, every list you ever made. Keep your done and finished lists in a pile somewhere, or take their photo, to remind you how well you did and how hard you worked to accomplish them.

Reviewing will help you see the big picture. Probably every morning you start to feel a little anxious about your day. Sit down with your list of tasks in front of you and start visualizing how you perform your duties. Researchers have done experiments to prove that the brain shows the same activity, whether you perform a given task or you are only imagining it. Imagine yourself doing all the work. If there are too many things on your list, imagine yourself doing the first three successfully. You can consciously raise your energy and enthusiasm to perform all the tasks, when you can already see yourself doing them in your mind.

Reviewing is a necessary action for proper judgment. At the time of the making of the lists, you may become overeager and convince yourself you can accomplish the inconceivable. Reviewing will keep you grounded. In time, when you get trapped in the middle of the road with no apparent way out, reviewing might open your eyes for more solutions. You may realize you've been doing something wrong, or that you can do something faster in a different way than the planned. In any case, it's good knowing you have something to rely on.

Resources to help you get things done

Our modern lives are complicated, it's a fact. Among the many choices we are offered every day, we have troubles picking the right things. We are often swamped with information we don't know what to do with, so we end up letting it slide through our brains without properly processing it. Fortunately, there are people who think about our productivity for us.

Evernote, Dropbox, Quip, and Onenote are all apps designed for taking notes, storing favorites and sharing. You can use them to save documents, bookmark searched information and collect music. You can easily find your files by using keywords in the searches, and of course, by tags. They are free for limited use, but if you need a lot of space or more updates per month, you can become a premium member and enjoy the benefits. You can download them on all your devices, and have everything important easily accessible.

Todoist and Asana are task management application you can use besides the calendar on your phone or Google. Todoist design is clean and simple, but it allows many features, like collaboration between users, reminders based on location, great classification tools and offline functionality. Asana is the rising star app among managers, because it allows many features like establishing a plan through creating tasks, commenting on the created tasks, mentioning other users in the comments, assigning them to a task or as task followers. You can add deadlines, search related tasks and receive notifications when other users completed their task. It's a user friendly platform that allows full communication with all parties involved in the project, only through the app.

If your job involves the social media platforms, you can choose between Hootsuite and Bufferapp. With Bufferapp you will no longer have to worry if the scheduled information reaches the World Wide Web in time, because you can appoint the time of the day when you want the app to post in your name on several platforms including, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, and LinkedIn. The con of

using Hootsuite is that the user is not allowed to control when the app posts the info, but they send email reports on how each post is doing on the internet. The pros are that it allows you to use more profiles and unlimited number of posts, where Bufferapp allows only 2 profiles and 10 posts per profile every day, assuming you have a free account.

These are only a few of the most popular applications many business oriented people use, to stay productive and organized. You can research more tools and see which one is the best for you and your professional or personal planning strategies.

Conclusion

In the world that we live in, organizational skills should be taught at school. Communication skills, self-defense and manners should be taught also, but that's a different story. The point is: without these skills developed, you will not be able to function as an adult. You may struggle to survive and make ends meet, whether in your social or professional life, but the point of life can't be to just survive.

As modern people we carry a lot of stress on our shoulders. We need to think about work, our kids, our social lives, what we say, what we do, what we post. If you are not organized, your work is going to interfere in your social life, your social life will go idle, everyone will be disappointed because you are never 100% there, and you'll live life under the pressure of uncertainty.

All that can be changed if you start making plans. Big plans, small plans, instant plans, long term plans, make a whole scheme of plans!

At one point, we all get caught up in the moment and lose our ground, but once you have a note to push you in the right direction, you will turn out all-right.

Stepping Outside Of Your Comfort Zone

How to Release Your Hidden Potential

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Introduction

At some point in our lives, most of us have felt stuck. We feel like each day is the same: go to work, come home, have something for dinner and do the same routine before bed. Some of us throw in some fun outings, whether those are book club meetings, bowling or dart leagues or just the weekly dinner with friends.

Families with children are caught up in the whirlwind of games, practices and activities for the children. Then, suddenly the adults realize they have lost all their hobbies and interests and are stuck in the same routine with no sign of relief.

When that happens, it is time to find your way out of that routine and into new interests and routines that make you feel happier and more fulfilled. Now, if you are that parent with kids to take care of, that does not mean you aren't happy with your children. You do, however, need to find some time to be yourself and have interests outside the home that don't involve supporting your children.

Otherwise, you will find that when your youngest leaves for college or moves into their own residence and begins working, you and your spouse are driving each other crazy and have no outlets to blow off steam, chat with people with similar interests, or simply find time for yourself. Therefore, now is the time to begin stepping outside the box.

What IS the Box?

You have heard the phrase “thinking outside the box.” Typically used in connection with business dealings, it means introducing new concepts or new perspectives to bring in more business - and therefore more profit. This is the ultimate goal with a business, maintaining profits and increasing them.

So when it comes to your life, what is “the box?”

The box is the routine, the rut, the same-old, same-old that you do day-in and day-out. Can you predict how your day will go a week from now? How about a month from now? If you can plan ahead as much as a year in advance, because things never change other than

doctor's appointments or other random events that are part of your life, but don't occur on a regular basis, you are in "the box."

Signs You are in a Rut

Does life seem to be boring and on repeat? Are you feeling like there's no reason to be happy with your life? These and some other indications are sure signs it is time to start working on your life. It is time to make changes and find the joy and fun that your life has been lacking, possibly for a very long time.

For those who aren't sure if you are in a rut, consider the following (1):

- Worry is a big part of your life: Everyone worries. Bills, job stress, potential problems with relationships all tend to weigh on one's psyche. However, when the worry greatly outweighs any happiness in your life, it may be because you are stuck in the same routine and have lost all the things that made you happy.
- Everything seems difficult: If your life seems to be a constant struggle, and your focus has come down to making it through the next hour or to the next day, that is a problem. Sure, people have bad days or a bad week where you cannot wait for another day to start or a chance for things to improve. Still, if all your weeks seem the same and you continue to struggle toward a better day that does not come, you need a change.
- If you have made changes, but things fall back to the same routine quickly: You got a new job, you moved in a new apartment, or you changed up the gym that you frequent. When you made the change, things got better. However, it did not take long for your stress level to go back up and any enjoyment and challenge you found in your life to fall away again. That means you need to make other changes in order to benefit from the big decisions like a job change.
- You can't answer the question, What's New? The biggest and simplest indication that you are in a rut is if you run into someone you know, whom you have not seen in a while. When that individual asks you what is new, you have absolutely no answer. Then, when you go home that night and really think about it, you realize that there is no answer to that. You have not done anything new or different in so long, you cannot remember the last time you actually did. That means you are in a rut.

Why is it important to get out of your comfort zone?

For some people, it seems very counterproductive to consider changing routines and making big decisions that lead to drastic differences. However, despite the fact you are living with a routine that avoids risk and keeps stress levels to a minimum, you are living a routine that has increased your depression level or simply leaves you bored and listless. Sometimes stepping out of the comfort zone and taking some

risks can mean higher levels of enjoyment and a better mental health.

There are other reasons to change up your life and step outside that comfort zone. One reason is that anxiety tends to help push you to be better. Living in a routine with little to no stress or anxiety also means you do not put forth the maximum effort at your job or to accomplish things in your personal life. Therefore, a bit of anxiety and risk can make you put forth more effort. That in turn helps you gain confidence and increases your self-image.

Also, despite the fact that humans by nature prefer comfort over chaos, the insertion of change and challenge into your life actually increases creativity and helps you grow as a person. Being more creative is good for the soul and mental health. Growing as a person means you can be more content with who you are, as you explore that perception and find deeper levels to yourself. Sticking with the same routine, i.e. hiding in your comfort zone, does not allow for personal growth or any new levels of your personality to be discovered.

For parents with children, there are two very important reasons to change up your life and find more enjoyment and satisfaction. The first is the example you are setting for your children. If you do not make an effort to find the fun in life, they will think that when they get older, joy and fun will just fall out of life. They have no positive reasons to look forward to adulthood and having children. They may even think they are the cause of your depression or lack of joy. That would be a problem that could have long-lasting consequences.

The second is the environment where you are raising your children. You want their home life to be filled with happiness and positivity. It can be hard enough to raise children. When you do not have any time for yourself and feel stuck in a rut, it is even harder to provide the rich and loving environment you want to provide for growing children.

Chapter 1: Where to Start Breaking Out

Now that you have a few reasons to use as incentive, the question becomes, what do you need to do? Well, you cannot continue along the same vein you have been in up to this point. That much becomes obvious. So what do you need to do?

You MUST disrupt your Comfort Zone

In order to make changes, you need to break out of the routine. That routine, or your comfort zone, is what is holding you back. It is what causes the depression and total lack of interest in your everyday life. You know what is ahead, so you are already bored. Waking up to a new day does not mean you can find new challenges or fulfill a goal. Instead, you go through the motions. Those motions are the problem. Getting away from the comfort zone is a necessity to start enjoying life again.

Why is Disrupting the Comfort Zone good?

There are many reasons that you need to break out of your comfort zone. Some of those are mentioned above. However, there are other necessities to changing your life and challenging yourself.

- **Avoid Regret:** People that stay in the same routine throughout their lives rarely come to their deathbed and find satisfaction when looking back. Instead, most people have a list of things that they wish they had done. Indeed, one common trend today that seems to be a fight against living in the comfort zone is having a bucket list, or a list of things you feel you must accomplish before you die. This is a positive thing to do. Creating that list makes you think of things you don't do on a daily basis, things that will make you happy you tried them. This helps to avoid that final sequence of flashbacks, where you realize you didn't accomplish half of what you set out to as a youth.
- **Learn that Perfection is Overrated:** When you talk to people who are successful, most of them say they just kept trying. This is a key to making a difference, finding new talents and improving on some abilities you have that aren't optimal. You just keep trying. People who strive for perfection typically give up far too easily. This is not because they cannot accomplish what they are attempting. Instead, they have just set their own expectations too high and do not have the fortitude to reach the goal. Instead, focus on smaller goals and understand that it may take a lot of effort – and a lot of failure – to get to where you want to be.

- Remember you aren't the Only One: No matter what you are trying to accomplish, you aren't alone. There are people who have tried before you, and there are children and people who haven't even been born yet who will someday attempt to accomplish what you are trying to do today. For them, even if not for yourself, remember that what you are doing is possible. Those people who have done this before can be your role models. In turn, then, you can be an inspiration for those who have not yet begun to try. They can look at you and what you accomplished and take heart from your efforts. This is a good way to focus and move yourself forward. Remember you aren't only doing this for yourself.(2)

Now is when it really becomes necessary to take a look at yourself, in order to free yourself from the box you are stuck in. You already possess a number of qualities that can be helpful and detrimental to the process ahead. For that reason, it is a good idea to take an objective view of who you are now, so you can use certain aspects to your advantage and work hard to minimize the effort wasted by those areas where you aren't as strong.

Step 1: Acknowledge your strengths and weaknesses

1. **Try to See What Others Count on You to Provide:** This may take consulting friends and co-workers. This is a tough question, so don't expect everyone to be able to provide you a list. However, for those close to you, they should be able to give you one thing they are comfortable with delegating to you. If you asked them to tell you what you would do in a certain situation, they should be able to give you one thing. Hopefully, that will be a positive contribution instead of negativity or sarcasm. However, if their answer is something you wouldn't consider a positive contribution, there is always a positive way to spin it. If you are the one who is always sarcastic, sometimes a real answer can come from that anyway. So, you can still contribute positively. However, if their answer is a negative contribution, you can take that as additional incentive to step out of your box and become a positive contributor to the world at large.
2. **Look at Both Physical and Mental Strengths and Weaknesses:** Most people are aware of their physical limits without extensive consideration. However, the opposite is true for mental strengths. Most people can tell you where they feel lacking mentally, but they may not be able to give a list of all the things they do well. If you are part of this group, it is very important that you take the time and put in the effort to evaluate yourself in depth. A big change to your life is only going to work if you go into it honestly and with a good idea of what needs changed and what is in good shape when it comes to your current situation.
3. **Be Honest:** Typically, a look at strengths and weaknesses has the individual attempting to build up any slightly positive attribute and to try to explain away or ignore any weakness. This will not be helpful when you are trying to step outside the box and enact a big change. Instead, suck it up and truly look at traits for what they are right now.

Step 2: Fear isn't real. Acknowledging Anxiety

Anxiety can be helpful. It alerts us to a potential dangerous situation and prepares the body for fight or flight response. That can save your life. Whenever you are enacting a big change, anxiety is going to be present. Therefore, instead of trying to bottle up or ignore fears, acknowledge the response to change. Understand that you will feel anxiety, and that is not a bad thing in all cases.

Anxiety can build up to be a serious condition. It may be present already, due to the fact you have been doing the same things the same way for a long period of time and not challenging yourself. Sometimes, the result of not challenging your mind is the introduction of an anxiety disorder. Your mind has too much free time and too much “energy,” so it starts creating scenarios that will never happen. It can also focus on situations that could happen, and build them into scenarios that make achieving goals or living life happily nearly impossible.

This is what you are striving to avoid. This is why you are taking steps now to change your life and live a more fulfilled one, where healthy challenges and the achievement of goals is interspersed with relaxing days when you simply are happy to be alive.

Chapter 2: Avoid the Deep End of the Pool

When making changes, some people believe that the only way to find success is to do it NOW. That means stop smoking cold turkey, cut out the extra calories and lose weight immediately or simply stop allowing yourself to indulge in a bad habit. This is not usually successful. It is a very difficult undertaking to stop doing something you have done for an extended period of time simply by deciding to stop doing it. Instead, set goals that slowly build on each other.

Start with baby steps. Gradual change is the best.

A baby does not leap from its mother's womb, ready to dance. Instead, that baby is born needing absolutely everything from its parents. Then, as time goes on, their strength slowly builds and they learn to sit up, then crawl. They begin using furniture or inanimate objects to help them stand. Some reach for the family dog and use the patient creature to help them reach their feet and even take a few steps – if the dog is a saint.

Finally, the babe is ready to take steps unassisted. Even then, they do not go from those steps holding onto a hand (or the family dog) and start walking a mile or running. They take a few steps and fall. Then, they get up and do it again. The next time, they may make it across the room. Then, they can walk through the house. Next, they begin to tackle other challenges.

Like the baby ready to take steps unassisted, you must begin with a few steps or one small challenge.

If you have a set routine that never alters, take the conscious effort today to make a change. If you always order Chinese food on Monday, today's change (if it is not Monday) can be simply choosing to order Chinese food. If it is Monday, make the decision not to order Chinese.

Tomorrow, you can decide to visit a restaurant you have not tried. You can stop into a bookstore and buy a book by an author you have never read. You can choose to alter the route where you run, going a block or a mile in a different direction.

All of these are easily attainable goals. They can give you the confidence you will need to try a bigger change next week, or next month. Changing your life and stepping out of the box is an extended process. It is also a long-term undertaking. Your goal is to not fall back into this boring routine you have set up. Instead, you hope to live a happier life with lots of new experiences, starting today with the Chinese

food.

Do One Small Thing Different Every Day

Now, this part, while not overly taxing, may be a challenge. If you choose a different food for lunch today and you stop into the bookstore tomorrow, you may be exhilarated with these changes. Since you have lived the same routine for so long, this is a lot to take in. You may want to retreat to your old routine in order to give yourself some time to get used to this.

DO NOT STOP NOW.

The challenge is in keeping the momentum. Do something different every day. Make sure you are changing things up so that you don't fall back into Monday's routine next week or two weeks from now. Each day needs to have something new occur.

Remember, too, that they do not always have to be things that require you to go somewhere or spend money. If you always do your laundry on Thursday, because there is nothing good on TV and no other pending tasks to complete, leave the laundry for Friday – or get it done Wednesday.

If you only allow yourself to go out for a treat once a week, change the day you go. Otherwise, opt for a walk through a neighborhood park or an evening home with a book, if that tends to be something you don't get to enjoy often.

The important thing is to keep doing things a little different. Get a different flavor of coffee or add a different fruit to your smoothie. Make a new dish for dinner. The change does not have to be something big. It simply has to be a new thing you do or a new lesson you learn each day.

Acknowledge Your Success

If you did something new today, stop and pat yourself on the back. Remember that each small change is a step in the right direction. You are getting out of the rut every time you make a different choice. So look back on your day and take pride in the fact you did something

different. That will help you feel good about making another change tomorrow.

Avoid the Deep End of the Pool

While you are working on these gradual steps, it can be all too easy to get caught up in the small successes and take on a huge change. Do not skip to the big changes. Do not go running and jump into the deep end of the pool. Despite the false sense of confidence you have gained, it is not wise to start skipping ahead. Instead, stick with the gradual changes, the baby steps and small successes. Then, when you feel comfortable, you can start making those significant changes that will mean huge differences to your life moving forward.

Chapter 3: Stepping Outside the Box with Your Social Life

While you are changing your routines and developing the confidence to make bigger changes, now is a great time to start applying this logic to other aspects of your life. This means both your social life and your work life can benefit from small changes and some effort to make a difference.

Getting out and developing a social circle outside of Normal Routines

It is far too easy as an adult to get wrapped up in our lives and our jobs and suddenly realize you have no friends. Or, even if you have friends, that is part of your rut. You only see the group of friends you have once a month for coffee or a few drinks. That gets boring.

Begin by trying to change up the meetings you have with the group of friends you have. Suggest other activities or ask if people are free to meet more often. This may end up not working out, as other people may not be willing to change their routines. They may be perfectly content in the rut that is their lives. Therefore, you need to move on. Don't leave your current friends behind. Instead, look to expand your horizons and make new friends.

How do you accomplish this? There are several ways. Luckily, this may end up being a benefit of trying something new every day. When you are branching out and exploring new interests, you are bound to run into new people and even connect with some of them.

Like the movie, *Yes Man*, starring Jim Carey, you will be surprised what happens once you start feeling more comfortable with your efforts to do something new.

Stopping into the bookstore for a book by a new author may show you a book signing or a book club that will be happening at that bookstore. Boom, you have an opportunity to meet new people.

Taking a different route for your morning run takes you past a new business. Maybe there's a restaurant or even a bar that is advertising a band that will be playing on the weekend. Get dressed up and head there for a drink. Enjoy the music (or don't) and find yourself surrounded by new people, many of which will be more than happy to strike up a conversation.

Even doing your laundry on a different day can net you a new friend if you have to go to the laundromat. People who are doing laundry on their regular day will be at the laundromat. You have never seen them, since your routine never had you at the laundromat at the same time. Now, you are changing that.

Each small change you make has potential to bring countless positive changes to your life. However, if these don't pan out, there are other ways to try to expand your social circle.

These include:

- Hosting a party and inviting people you have any connection with: For example, the parents of children who attend school with your kids, people who work at your company but in a different division or even people that work at your spouse's company that he or she doesn't interact with regularly. Opening your life to these people can be a major success, or a fantastic failure (consider yourself warned). However, doing this is a big step for you and can help you realize that not everything has to work out. It's the effort you are making to change that is going to bring you success in the long run.
- Join a Gym: Exercise is very beneficial for both physical and mental health. If your regular routine does not include trips to the gym, it's worth considering the addition both to meet people and simply to create a healthier lifestyle for yourself.
- Go to a Concert: Music brings people together. If you love a band but haven't seen them live, go to a concert. If you like a certain type of music and know of a bar that hosts bands that play that style, head there one night. Enjoying the music will loosen you up and before you know it, you may be spending time with people you have never seen before. Get their number and make plans to hang out again. (3)

Where you live does have a significant impact on this step. Some people who live in small towns have limited opportunities to find and meet new people. The same type of music is played at different venues, the same type of books are typically read. Do not hesitate to use the resources available. Even if there is not much to do or many new activities to explore, there has to be one new thing you haven't tried that you have some interest in.

It is important at this point to NOT turn to the Internet. Making new friends via the Internet is OK, but the important element now is to find people, even on the Internet, that you can spend time with in person. The Internet means staying home and it actually is isolating yourself. At this point, when you are trying to change your life and broaden your social circle, turning to the Internet will set you back.

Bigger areas have event calendars and variety. For those who live in these areas, capitalize on what is available. Enjoy the fact that you can meet a number of new people when you venture out and possibly gain a new interest.

Release yourself from Limiting Beliefs

All of us were labeled something in high school or college, or we got put in a certain category at our first real job, that sticks with us as we get older.

If you were a nerd or a wallflower in school, this particularly rings true. However, it also affects you when you are told by an employer you are only good at certain tasks or there is no way you will advance at this company for **this particular reason**

It is time to let go of those labels or those perceived limitations. Earlier, you looked at your strengths and your weaknesses. THAT is who you are. You should not be accepting of or perpetuating any label you received anywhere along the way.

If you were told by an employer you were only good at certain things, take that as encouragement to work on other things. Look at it as a compliment you are good at x,y, and z. Now, you can work on the rest of the alphabet and any other areas you WANT to improve. Because, as I'm sure you have heard before,

“Where there's a will, there is a way.”

You are currently deciding to change your life. That means, you can take it in any direction. You can be a workout enthusiast even if you were far from a “jock” in high school. Remember, those people may well be at the same point you are right now, only they are hoping to develop mental strengths or build healthier habits in thinking and learning.

Chapter 4: Use the Internet to Smash Your Comfort Zone

Yes, in the previous chapter, the advice was not to rely on the Internet. That is when it comes to meeting new people. When it comes to finding ways to change up your routine, the Internet is a valuable new resource that can be helpful in any number of ways.

The first step is to look at your city and the surrounding area where you live. Whether you have lived there all your life or are a recent transplant, there are probably areas you haven't explored or hidden secrets about your home that you aren't even aware of.

Travel Podcasts

A trend on the Internet is the use of a podcast to showcase the positive attributes of a city. Created by someone who lives there and has done some exploring on their own, these podcasts can share valuable secrets with you before you even set foot out the door.

To find these podcasts, google your city and the term travel podcasts. For big cities like New York City, you get results like “157 things to do in New York City”, while for other cities, like Savannah, GA, a podcast comes up to show what the ghost tours provided by Blue Orb Tours look like. You can find all sorts of new experiences by Googling.

Note, travel podcasts have not reached everywhere. For a city like Debuque, Iowa, for example, there aren't any podcasts at the top of the results. However, www.travelDebuque.com can give you ideas of where to eat or activities “along the river”, or involving arts, gaming, the outdoors, nightlife, shopping or sports. Now is the time to start clicking on the sub-headers you normally avoid. Branch out and try some of the features your city holds that you previously never dreamed of enjoying.

Apps

Below are some apps that can make your phone helpful and get you out of the house and exploring your city, or the ones within a short drive.

HERE: The Travel & Local subcategory in the Google Play store is filled with free apps that can help guide you on a trip, help you book hotels or simply get from Point A to Point B. This particular app offers a route planner and access to reviews from reputable sources like TripAdvisor and Lonely Planet to help you find the gems of locations and activities in your area that you weren't previously aware of. Use the app to plan mini adventures in your area and really step out of your comfort zone.

Gogobot: City & Travel Guide: This app has won awards for being the best travel app (*Time Magazine*, *Travel & Leisure*) and the “secret weapon for having fun in your hometown”. It provides information on the best of what is near you, fun unique things to do in your city based on your interests and the options for adventures and group outings.

Wanderlust: Using the Foursquare app, this app helps people create a story based on their location. Then, you can enjoy the different parts of the story by visiting certain locations. This is a great option, since it provides incentive to go new places and find out how the story continues.

Serendipitor: This app is perfect for you. Breaking out of your routine, trying new things and taking new routes is easy when it comes to this app. It uses Google Maps and allows the user to start typing in a destination. You can choose your route based on the amount of time you have to get there. You can also take the suggested activities from the app (like walking into a building along the way just to go to the highest floor) to help you do new activities.

Shadow Cities: This app is a Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game (MMORPG) that is available on the iPhone. It uses the maps of your neighborhood and the city, as well as surrounding areas, as the background for the game world. It assigns magical properties to places you have been a million times, and it encourages you to visit other locations to determine which location is the most important to the game. It has the added potential to show you another interest you never knew you had (role playing games). (4)

The Internet can also be an endless fount of information for you when you want to try new hobbies or develop new interests. You can search out new types of music or find new activities that are held in your area.

Geocaching is a big trend that people tend to take on when they want something new to experience. A search for geocaching brings up local and national groups. It brings up a YouTube channel and a Facebook page.

This gives you numerous starting points to learn about the hobby and decide if you want to attempt it. Once you decide, you can get in touch with others in your area that already have a love for the hobby, and you can reach out via the social media niches to find people who are like you and find out all you could ever want to know about geocaching.

This is one example of a hobby or interest you can research on the Internet and find out all about. Prior to the Internet, you may never have been aware such a hobby existed. Now you can learn about it and more, simply with a few clicks.

Other interests include journal writing, scrapbooking, rock climbing, hiking, video gaming or anything else that may catch your attention. Look it up online, learn the basics and anywhere locally that you can join a group or at least attend a meeting about the interest. Then you gain a new hobby and can meet new people (as covered in Chapter 3).

Chapter 5: Going Forward

Now you have started the process. You do something little every day that is new and different. You even took the suggestions and made a new friend (we are starting small remember) at an event you attended or a new location you visited. You plan on keeping this up.

So, what does that mean for the future?

Well, first and foremost, you are changing. This means good things for you, a happier outlook on life because you can count your successes, and the potential to keep building on the changes and keep making your life better. The future you is not something you can predict from this moment. What does that mean?

It means all good things.

Your ability to understand the future and contribute in a positive manner is a definite benefit of changing your routine and finding the courage to completely change your lifestyle. Likewise, your abilities to deal with others and impart helpful knowledge and even inspiration based on your own experience grows with each new experience you have and each new day that brings challenges and your successful efforts to resolve those challenges.

You'll be able to adapt to change better, as well. Since you are forcing yourself to do something new and different each day, leading up to bigger changes and more dramatic differences, the introduction of something new to your routine by someone else will be much easier to stomach.

Having a new superior at work or being saddled with a project that does not exactly fit into your realm of talents might previously have thrown you into a tailspin. However, since you have set your goals and made your own changes, the fact that these things occur will simply be something you welcome as a new challenge that allows you to explore new facets of your work persona.

How to Capitalize On New Experiences

There are certain things to consider when moving forward with your life after the box. Don't forget that at one time, you did feel stuck and were dealing with the negative emotions and lack of ambition that come with being stuck in a rut. Then, you are in a better place to help someone else.

Don't allow yourself to fall back into those negative routines. If you do see it happening, stop and re-evaluate. It can be easy to fall into those old routines if something you try is not successful or if you have something traumatic happen. However, do not let those old habits take over and drag you back into the depressive state you were living in.

Take heart in that you made real progress up until this point. Recognize you are going through a bad spot, and if necessary, go back to trying to do one small thing new each day. Remember that babies don't run the moment they leave the womb. Therefore, you can't be expected to go from your old habits straight back to the progress you were enjoying if you do have some backsliding. Instead, go back to trying new things with baby steps.

Chapter 6: Benefits that Grow from Stepping Outside the Box

Changing your routine and living life outside the box you had created for yourself may not seem like it would have significant benefits. However, it can have effects on your work life, your incentive to do better and any number of far-reaching effects.

New ideas will come more naturally

There are many reasons that having a new routine will lead to easily having new ideas. For one, changing up your routine and implementing changes to every day of your life means you are exposed to new people, new ideas and new problems. These lend themselves to coming up with new ideas that take elements from various things you have experienced and entwining them for an innovative new idea that so far, no one else has had.

This can be very helpful for your work life. Previously, you lived the same routine, so there was no basis for new ideas when a problem was introduced at work. Now, you may have met new people or seen new ideas for handling situations. Then, when a new situation arises at work that has elements you have seen elsewhere, you can combine what you have seen and the elements you are already comfortable with in your work environment to create a solution to the problem. This will be extremely valuable to your superiors, possibly leading to advancement at work.

That would have never been possible had you stayed in the same routine in your personal life and never ventured outside the box.

You'll acquire new perspectives in life

Meeting new people is always a precursor to seeing things a different way. Likewise, sharing new experiences with someone and perhaps finding out something new about them when you find out something about yourself can lead to a new understanding of life. That means a new perspective from which to view future experiences and a new frame for past experiences.

There is limitless knowledge to be gained, and from that knowledge all kinds of new perspective to add to your life. This is a benefit that goes beyond making your life happier. It makes it more fulfilling and helps you learn so much about the way things are for other people.

You'll motivate yourself and others

Far too often, the reason you are comfortable with the rut you find yourself in is because those around you are also stuck in a rut. For those who are overweight, typically you realize you have family members and friends who are only too happy to live a couch potato lifestyle and never lose weight either.

For those who smoke or drink, they typically find themselves surrounded by smokers and drinkers in social settings. This can be expanded to cover various different points of your life.

How is this relevant?

Well, if you are living in the box and stuck in a rut, then the same may be true of your family members and the people you call friends. It can be true of co-workers who you see on a daily basis. When you begin changing things in your life, it becomes apparent to those around you fairly quickly. Your attitude and demeanor change, your outward appearance changes and the things you talk about to these people change based on your daily experiences.

Others notice the positive changes in you, and they become inspired to change too. They may decide to try the same restaurant you mentioned, or pick up a book by the new author that you are reading. They may decide to take an extra walk or start training for a run, based on something you did that sounds really fun.

You are their inspiration. You are introducing possibilities into their world simply by bringing new experiences into your own. You may not realize the impact you have on the lives of others, but the truth is, it can be significant. Therefore, take heart that changing your life can also be an incentive to others to change their lives for the better.

Waking Up Becomes Exciting Again

When you are in a rut, waking up to the alarm can be a major effort. It brings no thought of new activities to experience or the

satisfaction with knowing you put in a good day the day before. It simply is the motion of waking, turning off the alarm and starting a new day that will be much like the one before.

When you start making changes, facing new challenges and trying something new, you find new joy in waking up and seeing what the day will bring. This is great for you and those around you.

It is also good for your health. Waking up with excitement for the day ahead makes you feel better. It gives you a youthful feeling, and that in turn makes you live longer since you are finding joy in your days and have reason to look forward to the next day. Older people that live to be 100 usually share stories of how much they enjoy life, what they look forward to and what they have learned that helped them see life that way. You are taking the positive steps you need to take to be like them when you begin stepping outside the box.

Chapter 7: Success Stories You May Recognize

If you are starting to feel like this is too much of a challenge for you, fear not. It will be difficult, since you are used to the way you live your life. Even if you desperately want to change and improve your lifestyle, going against the comfort of staying in the same routine so everything is predictable is a really strong force to overcome. Below are the stories of 15 people that found success after choosing to step outside the box.

A. A mother, divorced and attending school to do better for herself and her children, decided to write a book while she was living on welfare and attempting to complete school. The book turned into a series, where people waited impatiently outside bookstores for midnight releases.

The series? *Harry Potter*.

Her name is Joanne Rowling. Fans know her by her pen name, however, or as J.K. Rowling. She is now a billionaire.

B. A struggling actress who was known for her B-movie roles kept plugging and working hard until landing a leading role on a television show. Following that break, she went on to be the first woman to run a major television studio. She won four Emmys and has a museum in her hometown, where she is well-known and loved.

The TV show? *I Love Lucy*.

Her name was Lucille Ball, and she ran the television studio, Desilu, where many other successful television shows were created.

C. A college dropout wrote a novel, which was rejected by publishers. When it was finally accepted, it was not well received, so the author moved to Vietnam to teach English. The man then enlisted in the Army and was involved in action that resulted in him receiving two Purple Hearts. Following that experience, the man began creating films that landed him three Oscars.

The man? Oliver Stone.

He created a lot of war-focused works, like *Platoon*, *Natural Born Killers* and *Born on the Fourth of July*.

D. An author received 30 rejections for a work.

The work? *Carrie*

The author? Stephen King (5)

E. An individual attempted close to 20 jobs, being fired from all of them, before he went on to create a franchise that rakes in untold amounts of profit from its 18,000 locations.

The franchise? Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC).

The entrepreneur? Colonel Harland Sanders (6)

F. A U.S. Olympic hopeful that failed to make the team, a woman who worked for *Vogue* yet never made editor, this woman chose to take another tack when it came to fashion. She began designing wedding gowns and found not only her passion, but the way into the hearts and weddings (and pocketbooks) of millions.

Her name? Vera Wang. Her business is worth over \$1 billion.

G. A man helped start a business in a garage, got booted out of the business when it became super successful and watched it fall into ruin. He forced his way back in and brought that business back to being one of the top technology creators in the world.

His name? Steve Jobs.

The company? Apple.

As you can see, any of these individuals could have found a comfortable manner of living and given up on efforts and dreams. Our world would be sorely lacking without their contributions. This is not to say that you will become famous or earn lots of money, although who would have a problem with either of those things coming to pass?

Still, you can see that staying in a rut and not challenging yourself is not the way to become successful and find your true calling in life. Instead, it is up to you to push on no matter how many rejections or issues you face. Then, you can take pride in all that you accomplish. And, if you happen to become successful, you can be twice as happy that you decided to step outside the box.

Getting out of the rut you have created for yourself will take commitment and significant effort. It cannot be accomplished by jumping in the deep end of the pool. Instead, you need to stop and take baby steps. You need to be consistent and do something new each day. Remember to stay focused, forgive yourself for backsliding and be willing to start with baby steps again. That may be what it takes to get going again. However, don't give up simply because you find yourself falling back once or twice.

Remember that you can be the inspiration for others, and take heart that there were other people who had the choice between staying with what was familiar and choosing to take on new challenges until they found the success they were looking for.

There are many ways to start out and add new activities to your life. You can start as simple as choosing a different meal and then build to new activities. You can change your social life with some effort and a bit of bravery. Being uncomfortable simply means you are dealing with a new situation. Face your anxiety and recognize that in some situations, anxiety can be beneficial. Then, move forward with your efforts and find new friends.

Explore the area you live in. Even if you have lived there all of your life, there are bound to be areas you have not visited or activities you have not given a chance previously. Give those parts of life in your area a chance now. You may find something you never imagined you could like. It could be a big part of changing your life.

Finally, allow your changes to overflow into your work life and allow them to show in your everyday interactions. You can be the incentive someone in your life needs to make changes to their own life. They may find the courage to get out of their rut simply based on seeing how happy you are to step out of your box. Do not downplay your changes, as that will only detract from your sense of pride and not fully help others around you.

There are countless benefits to gain and nothing to lose from trying to improve your life and change all your old habits in for new, improved ones. It all begins with stepping outside the box.

Resources:

1. <http://www.life-with-confidence.com/signs-to-make-life-changes.html>
2. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2014/05/21/6-ways-pushing-past-your-comfort-zone-is-critical-to-success/>
3. <http://www.redbookmag.com/life/friends-family/g524/make-friends-as-an-adult/?slide=7>
4. <http://popupcity.net/top-5-apps-for-exploring-the-city/>
5. <http://www.businessinsider.com/15-people-who-failed-before-becoming-famous-2012-10?op=1>
6. <http://www.businessinsider.com/successful-people-who-failed-at-first-2015-7>

Starting Now
Taking Chances And
Figuring it Out as You Go

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Chapter 1: Make the Big Changes You Talk About

We all intend to do big things with our lives. We graduate high school and enter the workforce or head off to college with stars in our eyes. We have the best of intentions. However, reality demands that you start paying those bills on your own, find and pay for a residence and keep a job that helps make sure there is money in your pocket. So, your focus goes to these issues primarily. You still intend to get to those big dreams, but you cannot put the effort in today. Then, things slowly get away from us. We graduate college or have spent a few years in the workforce, trying to make a name for ourselves. We intend things to go a certain way, yet they never do.

Time goes on and suddenly, your plans and dreams seem far out of reach. However, they do not have to be. Instead of getting stuck in where your life is or on how different the path is from what you dreamed or even intended, you can Start Now.

Start Taking Massive Action

The important thing is to commit to the big changes. Start making the effort to accomplish the big goals and do the necessary steps to get there.

In order to move forward toward those goals that seem out of reach, you need to focus and put significant effort toward moving in that direction. It may make you uncomfortable, it may not meet with the full approval of those around you. Still, you need to do it in order to make yourself happy and to remind you that you can do anything you set your mind to.

Avoiding Naysayers

A big part of success is to not fall prey to what others say and the negative opinions that others tend to throw your way. You may not be that idealistic teenager anymore, but that does not mean you are too old to accomplish anything. Nor are you too (insert description here) to accomplish the goal you set for yourself as a younger, more optimistic you.

The best way to help yourself get on a roll toward positive changes is to avoid those who would try to cut you down and spread their negativity. There are a few ways to do this.

- Recognize them – Naysayers can come in any form, and the worst part is they can be anyone. That means they can be well-meaning loved ones, jealous co-workers or seemingly rational strangers, if it comes to that. Therefore, you have to recognize the people who are not helping you move forward toward a goal.
- Weigh the Validity of the Statement – Naysayers are not always wrong. Therefore, it is important to take a seemingly negative statement and see if it has any bearing on what you are doing. Sometimes, you can take the negative feedback and learn from it. Then, you can move forward in a better way than you would have without the negative insight. Still, not all negativity can be spun to help you. Therefore, some of it will simply have to be disregarded as you keep plugging forward.
- Confront or Ignore – There are two options once you have identified the naysayer and determined if you can use their negative insights. You can either choose to confront them, point out their negativity and attempt to sway them to support your cause, or you can choose to ignore them. If you choose to confront, you have to accept the possibility that

you may not succeed in getting them to agree with you. The confrontation could end ugly.

On the other hand, if you choose to ignore them, they may catch on and that situation can turn difficult as well.

- **Be Informed and Rest on Your Knowledge** – If your efforts are definitely going to face a lot of opposition, do your homework. Have arguments ready for those who aren't going to agree or who are going to try to tell you what a big waste of time your efforts are. If that does not work, at least feel confident that you know what you are doing and that it is well worth all the time and effort you are putting into the progress toward your goal. (1.1)

When possible, opt to interact with people who are going to support your goals and the efforts to achieve them. Obviously, in life that is not always possible. However, if you minimize interaction with the negative people, you can get further toward your goal faster. This is because you aren't spending time dealing with the negative input and the resulting doubt you will most likely begin to experience.

Negativity can be a huge setback for most people. Recognizing that and also identifying the people who inject that negativity, even if they don't mean to be negative, can help you deal with it in a more positive manner.

Remember that negativity is not an indication that these people doubt you can accomplish something. Typically, they think they are helping or they are simply being negative out of jealousy that you are trying to achieve your goals and they have not achieved theirs.

Keep plugging forward, no matter what is said or who is saying it. Remember that it is up to you to

succeed, and their negativity has no impact on the efforts you are putting in to find success.

Chapter 2: Be Proactive: Use These Tips

Working toward big goals can be daunting. You can not simply write “Change My Life” on a chalkboard and look at that day after day until you reach success. Success could take years. Looking at that huge goal and not feeling like you are making progress is a good way to cause your own defeat. You will start feeling doubtful since you aren't moving toward that big goal fast enough.

Instead, break the larger goal down into manageable – and preferably measurable – goals that can be focused on during smaller periods of time.

Write Down your Goals on a Weekly Basis

It has long been proven that writing goals down has a significant impact on the overall success of the effort. Does that sound questionable to you? Consider the following:

A 1979 Harvard MBA program analyzed their goals. When asked if they had clear, written goals for their future, the class answered in the following:

3% had written goals and plans

13% had goals and plans that were not written down

84% did not have clear goals set

Fast forward one decade:

The 3% who had clear and written goals were making 10 TIMES what the other 97% of the class

were making COMBINED.

Meanwhile, the 13% with goals that were not written down were making TWICE what the other 84% of the class were making. (2.1)

What does that mean for you? The same thing it meant for those MBA graduates. It PAYS to write down your goals. Think about it. If you can reach your goal more efficiently or more quickly or you can make more money en route to that goal, why not do so?

In that case, get out a pen and paper and start putting those goals in writing. Write down goals on a weekly basis. Split them up into segments that can be measured. Weekly goals should be things you can achieve in seven days. Then, once a month, tally the progress toward a larger goal. Those goals should be part of the big picture.

When writing down goals, the first step is the writing. Next, keep track of those goals. Write them where you can look at them off and on throughout the week, seeing where you stand on the list. Next, keep yourself accountable to that list. If you can not keep yourself accountable, it's time to find someone who can help you do so.

Find an Accountability Partner

Putting your goals in writing is one way to hold yourself accountable. You can determine what is important and what needs done before you can do the next step. However, even then you can lose some momentum and start doubting yourself. You can start to slack off, promising to get at it again tomorrow, or next week.

For that reason, it is a good idea to find someone who can keep you on task. Knowing that someone is paying attention to your efforts can go a long way to making sure you do what you need to do, and you do it now.

Find someone that is trying to achieve a similar goal. That way, you can give each other advice or share what worked or did not work for you. Then, you can both have feedback that can go a long way toward getting you both to the goal in the end.

Dieters have found that having someone else that hopes to lose weight paying attention to how they are doing is great incentive to keep working to drop those pounds. Likewise, another person who is hoping to save a certain amount of money is going to pay attention to see what is working for you in terms of filling up your savings account for that car, vacation or new home.

The same can be said of people trying to start a family, save some money, invest wisely or make headway in a business venture. If you find someone that is like-minded, you can keep each other on task, trade war stories and compare what is working and what is not. That can go a long way toward keeping you motivated and helping you keep moving forward.

Remember You Are Expert Enough

Since you are at a point in your life where you are past optimistic youth and not yet to wizened elder, you are an expert.

An expert at what? Well, that depends on you. However, it is safe to say you are no longer a novice at everything.

Take stock of your talents, the things you have found you are good at within the jobs you have held and in the activities you enjoy outside the office, or at least while you are not being paid. These are the areas where you can take pride and consider yourself an expert.

This isn't because you know EVERYTHING. Instead, it is because you have put in the time and gained experience in what works and what does not in regard to these particular areas of life.

Therefore, you know more than someone who has not put in the time and effort and does not have the tried experience that you have.

So you are not an expert, per se. However, you are Expert Enough. You can help others based on what you have done. You can tell someone when you know a certain effort or technique is not going to bring about the desired results. This, in turn, can help you gain confidence you will need to try the new experiences and see what works and what does not on your way to the goal you are setting now.

You are Expert Enough.

Chapter 3: Potential Hurdles to Overcome

Everyone develops bad habits. They may not have interfered with the jobs you have done up to now or the goals you set that were smaller and therefore have been met. Still, they can interfere when you set out to make a big change. Those bad habits can include two very important ones that greatly interfere with success: procrastination and talking yourself out of something before you even begin.

Procrastination

How common is procrastination? Well, it happens to the best of us, it happens to the worst of us and, honestly, it happens to everyone in between. At some point, most people if not every human on this earth finds themselves putting off chores or a set task to do something else or simply to do nothing. If you have a set due date, a lot of people find ways to keep avoiding the task until the last possible minute.

Officially, PsychologyToday says 20% of people are chronic procrastinators (3.1). They find it almost impossible to do a project or a set task before it absolutely must be completed. Some people even wait until the deadline is on them to begin the project. This means that, if it does get completed, it is not until after the time it was to be completed. However, there are ways to avoid this issue. With some effort, the desire to procrastinate can be overcome.

Tips to Avoid Procrastination:

- Recognize the Tendency – If you are playing a game on your phone, reading through spam

email you had no interest in reading last week when you got it or checking out the latest gossip on social media instead of getting started on something for work: you are procrastinating.

How often do you do this? When given a task, do you start mentally making a list of things that need to happen, or do you try to find something else to distract you? If you do not get started right away, you may be a chronic exhibitor of procrastination.

- Discover the Issue behind it – There can be any of a number of reasons why you tend to procrastinate instead of jumping right in to get the job done. In fact, each time can be a different reason. Still, the following are some possibilities for why you choose to do anything but the task at hand.
 4. Are you disorganized? - If this is the case, you can try to split the project up and do it in a logical order that can be done with certain tasks grouped together that help your organization.
 5. Is the task unappealing? - There is no avoiding the fact that sometimes you won't want to do something. However, recognizing that can help you get past it and get going on the project, to get it over with sooner.
 6. ;Are you expecting perfection? - Perfectionists are big procrastinators. This is because it is hard to be perfect. Recognize your unrealistic expectations and put the effort in to simply get the job done.
 7. Do you have trouble making decisions? - Recognize that you are afraid of doing the wrong thing. Then, if you have questions, ask someone. Otherwise, commit to doing the best you can and make the decision that seems most logical.
 8. Does the task seem impossible from the start? (3.2) – Some people build up a task until it seems like there is no way to get it done. Then, they put it off so it becomes impossible to do. Recognize your tendency to do this and start with a small task, then build. It becomes more manageable in this manner.

- Find Motivation to Do the Given Task – Some people find that setting a reward for getting the job done, even if it is a simple thing that no one else is aware of, helps them to keep on track. If you promise yourself a snack or a cup of coffee after getting the task accomplished, you might work harder to get it done in a timely manner. For a bigger challenge, make the reward correspond in significance.

Recognize how much money and free time you are costing yourself by giving in to those distractions now. Those emails will be there later, when you are home and relaxing and have nothing to do.

However, right now they are ensuring you won't be home to choose between checking spam email and watching the new episode of your favorite show this evening. Or, you are costing yourself money because you could be working toward a promotion by getting things done on time or early. Instead, you put them off and do not show your supervisors you are capable of a more important job and, coincidentally, more money.

Work on one thing at a time until you get the entire project completed. That way, you can feel accomplishment with each completion of a smaller task, until they have built up without you realizing it to have fulfilled the project you were given.

Talking Yourself out of Things before You Even Try

Negative self-talk is when you seem to be your own worst enemy. You don't believe you can succeed.

It starts small, but then it can grow with the power of a tornado or a runaway train. Suddenly, you have gone from being negative about one small thing to not believing you can accomplish a big goal.

You have decided you were wrong to want to try to change your life. You retreat into what is comfortable and well-known. Now, you will never know if you could have done it because you convinced yourself that you couldn't before you even began.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

- Lao Tzu

Most people have seen or heard the above quote. However, few take it to heart. When it comes to negative self-talk, that is exactly what you must remember. Also, each step takes you closer to your goal.

Tips to Deal with Negative Self-Talk:

- Distance – When you notice you are being negative, take a step back. Ask why you are thinking this particular project or goal is not attainable. Think back to when you have completed a task or reached a goal that initially you thought was impossible. Take heart from that success.
- Distract – When you find that you are thinking negatively, find something else to do. Pick something that is fun and yet takes a lot of concentration. Do some exercise, play a game that requires physical activity or get out of the environment you are in for a short period.
- Question – Ask why you are thinking in a particular way. See if you can spin the thoughts you are having. Also, consider the benefits you will miss out on by not trying to achieve this goal. Then, consider the good things that will happen if you achieve the goal.
- Put a Pin in It – If none of the above work, promise yourself to set aside the negative thoughts for now and revisit them later. Set a specific time of the day for you to deal with these thoughts. In most cases, by the time you get to that specified period, you may have gotten past the desire to feel that way or think in that negative manner. (3.3)

Chapter 4: Starting Now with Investments

The biggest problem people have when they want to begin investing is that they have very little money set aside to put toward the endeavor. However, part of knowing you are ready to invest in things like stocks is recognizing when you have already invested enough in your future.

Investments to Make First

Investments can be tricky. However, no matter where you are in life and the following list, you can Start Now and improve your situation. All it takes is starting to think about the process and seeing where you stand and what needs more work.

Invest in the Company 401k

When investing in the company 401k, you will avoid income tax until after your retirement, when you begin to draw from the plan. Also, some companies offer to match what you put in to a certain amount. This means more money for you in the 401k. That is a benefit.

It is also important to invest in an IRA if you have that option. While neither the 401k or the IRA are investments, they are money that will be available to you upon retirement. This is important before you get into buying stock. Then, you have an assurance of being prepared for deciding to stop working and enjoy life.

Make Sure You Have Sufficient Savings (4.1)

Having a cushion for when life happens is very important. You could lose your job, or you could be injured and be forced to live off what you have put away. For some people, the norm is living paycheck to paycheck. Then, when an unforeseen expense crops up or an injury occurs, the person is in a bad spot unless family can help or their credit is good and a loan is an option. Then, you are stuck paying someone back once you are back on your feet. So, start saving.

How much should you have in savings? The answer to that requires some thought from you. You need to consider how much you will need to buy things and to maintain them once purchased in the course of a year. You will also need to decide how much you will be willing to watch your account fluctuate, and you will need to decide when you will want to be able to start using the money (4.2).

Invest in a Home First

It is a wise decision to have already become a home owner before you decide to delve into further investments like stocks. Having a home increases your real estate equity and gives you a basis for a lot of future investments. It also gives you a residence that is yours, rather than living in a rental where a lot of the decisions are taken from you.

Investing in Stocks

Once you have done the above investments, then you may start considering investment in stocks. This is where smart investing comes in. You can start an investment portfolio with less than \$1,000. All it takes is some research, some money savvy and some help.

The keys to investing with a budget of \$1,000 or less are as follows:

- TreasuryDirect – For those who want to invest conservatively, this is a great way to get started. Savings Bonds and Treasury Inflation Protection Services, or TIPS, can be purchased directly from the Treasury. Just remember that there is a reason this is a conservative investment. You will also see a low return for the money you invest.
- Direct Stock Purchase Plans – These allow you to purchase stock directly from the company, thereby skipping the brokerage and any associated fees. This means there are no minimum investment requirements to meet. However, there typically will be a small fee charged by the agent in charge of the transfer.
- Dividend Reinvestment Plans – These plans take the dividends you earn from the stock and reinvest it for more shares. This can be accomplished by setting up an account and making the deposit to cover the initial investment. Then, your stocks take care of themselves. This is great for someone who wants to put minimal time into their investment management plans.
- Incremental Purchase Plans – These allow you to use a set amount of money to buy stocks each month. For those who want more control over their stocks, this is a good option. You also do not have to buy full shares of stock with this plan. Instead, you can buy fractions and therefore have money spread across a pool of stocks. (4.3)

Remember also that it is not too early to open an IRA. With \$1,000, online discount brokers are more than happy to provide access to investment tools that previously could not be enjoyed until you had \$10,000 or more to invest. Take advantage of the availability and see your investment portfolio begin growing.

Investments can be a tricky venture on your own. Therefore, be sure to do the research or connect with people like a broker or experienced investor that is willing to give you some tips. Starting out

and putting money into something that has no guaranteed payback is a frightening choice. Make sure you are confident in the choices you are making so as to maximize the chances that it will work out in your favor.

Start Now and find investments that suit you and can help maximize your monetary gains.

Chapter 5: Starting Now with Dieting

If you are looking in the mirror and unhappy with what you see, then today is the day to Start Now with dieting. Now, that does not mean cut out a meal or only eat a certain food today. Instead, begin by researching different diets and trying to put together an exercise plan. The key to successful weight loss is a balance of watching the calories you take in and also having an adequate exercise plan that you find success in doing regularly.

For help with an exercise plan, it may be a good idea to join a gym and consult a personal trainer. However, here are a few tips for setting up a maintainable exercise plan.

An Exercise Plan You Will Stick To

- Make sure there are a variety of activities. Even the most devoted exercise enthusiast will get bored after weeks of doing the same exercises every day, week after week. Set up a routine with some alternatives so if you hit a day when you just can not make yourself go to the gym to run laps or hit the treadmill, you can throw in a day of swimming or go to a Zumba class to take up the slack.
- If you are not experienced in exercising, start out with full body routines. Make sure you have enough time to dedicate to the routine you want to complete on a regular basis. Decide if you are putting in a gym at home or if you will visit a fitness center.
- Remember that it is the rest period between workouts that allows your muscles to develop. Do not skip that rest period (48-72 hours), because then you will only end up injured and not getting the results you hope to achieve.
- When it comes to exercises, a good rule of thumb is doing three to four sets of about five

exercises per workout. When you are doing an exercise, one set should be made up of roughly eight to 12 repetitions of the exercise. That should give your muscles an adequate workout.

- The more repetitions you are doing, the less time you should wait between them. That may seem counter-intuitive, but if you are hoping to fit in more reps to your overall time frame, it is best to spend less time resting in between.
- Circuits are the best way to burn fat and therefore contribute to a weight loss effort. What is a circuit? A circuit is doing a repetition of one of each of the exercises you want to accomplish, then repeating them in the same order again. Each time you do one set of each exercise, that is a circuit.

Finding the Right Diet for You

Start Now by researching the various diets that are out there. At this point, there are so many it would be impossible to discuss each one. However, we will discuss a few of the options that may work best for you to lose weight.

It is important to realize that the starvation diet, as well as many fad diets, where you subsist on only one food for a specified amount of time, will not help you in the long-term. You may lose a lot of weight fast. However, that weight includes most of the water in your body. That water is needed to maintain the body and stay healthy.

Therefore, once you start eating again or eating all the food groups, your body will come out of preservation mode, start retaining water again and a lot of the weight you lost will come right back. It is best to commit to a type of diet that takes longer to accomplish weight loss but gives you a better

chance of maintaining the loss once you have achieved it.

Consider the following types of diets as possibilities for you: (5.1)

- DASH Diet – The DASH Diet stands for Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension. The diet is balanced and includes whole grains and vegetables. It provides more good cholesterol than bad cholesterol, which is why it is successful for those trying to stop Hypertension. The diet does not have health risks, although for those with certain health conditions, it may be best to consult your doctor before starting this diet. Weight loss is a side benefit of this diet, rather than the focus. That makes this diet a good choice for those who want to eat healthier and lose weight. Combining this with regular exercise can really help with weight loss. (5.2)
- Atkins – Ranked among the top 10 for weight loss diets, the Atkins Diet is low-carb and advertises you will lose five pounds the first week. This is using The Nutrisystem Fast 5. There are four phases to the diet. You can eat more carbs as the phases progress. The good news is, you can eat the meats you prefer while on this diet. However, the calories you can ingest are highly regulated, and that involves a lot of list checking. Still, this diet is a good choice for quick weight loss. Keep in mind that quick weight loss does not mean long term success. (5.3)
- Jenny Craig – This diet is ranked in the top 10 for easiest diets to follow, best weight loss diets and best diets for healthy eating (based on U.S. News reviews 5.1). The diet involves a balanced diet and advertises an average weight loss of two pounds per week. It requires investment in the Jenny Craig pre-packaged meals, as the calories and portions are carefully measured for these meals. It also provides a personal consultant, support and motivation. If the budget is not a concern, this diet may be a great choice for you. (5.4)
- Weight Watchers – Another diet that requires monetary investment in a program, this diet

is considered the best commercial diet plan, the easiest one to follow and the best for weight loss (again, this is based on U.S. News reviews). The Weight Watchers diet provides a points system and a support system. It allows you to eat what you want, but you have to be honest about what you eat and the points you accrue. Foods that fill you up and provide good calories rather than empty ones are emphasized for this diet. It is advertised to help you lose one to two pounds per week. Fruits and vegetables carry a lot of positive feedback for this diet. (5.5)

- Slim-Fast – This diet gets high marks for weight loss and ease of following, but it is not considered a healthy option. For those hoping to keep their weight off long term, this may not be ideal. However, if you are aiming to lose some weight for a specific event, this diet may help. For this diet, restricting the number of calories you ingest and substituting shakes or bars made by Slim Fast for certain meals can make the difference, allowing you to lose one to two pounds each week. This can be helpful for bikini season or a wedding, for example. However, it won't hold up over the long term. (5.6)
- Paleo Diet – This diet claims you will lead a healthier life, be more fit and avoid diseases. However, the reality, at least per U.S. News reviews, is that this diet is way outside the top 20 for weight loss, healthy eating and ease of following (average rank is 32). The diet requires you to avoid anything not eaten in the days of the caveman. Refined sugar, processed foods and even grains are eliminated from your diet. The benefits of this diet are unknown when it comes to preventing diseases. The success rate for weight loss and lower cholesterol are as yet unknown. (5.7)

The above are six different diets, most of which you may already have heard of. They are far from the only options in the diet realm, however. Start researching today to find a diet that you think you could maintain and afford. Once you have determined which one you want to try, now is the time to work on avoiding procrastination. For both the exercise routine and the diet, make a plan to incorporate them

into your daily life starting today. Advance the plan over successive days until your daily routine includes both the exercise routine and the diet so you can begin working toward results. Start Now.

Chapter 6: Starting Now with Growing a Family

If you are at a point in your life where having children appeals to you, there are a few things to do before you get down to determining when you (or your spouse) are ovulating and when to try for conception. Those little beings, once they are conceived, will need a lot of stuff to help you care for them properly. In addition to ensuring you can keep a roof over their head, feed them and clothe them, they will need a place to sleep, a car seat for transportation and a reliable daycare if both parents are going to work. If both parents aren't going to work, that is also something you need to determine ahead of time so you can plan out a budget.

Questions You Should Ask

Below are some questions to ask yourself if you feel you are at a point to begin raising a child and/or adding to the current family status.

- Why are you considering starting a family? At a certain point in life, we begin to want children by instinct. While there is nothing wrong with this, you may not actually be ready to have children. Also, you may be considering adding a new little one because your parents are pressing for grandchildren or for another reason. When considering having a child, the reason should be because you are prepared to raise another human being.
- Are you Ready? Are you prepared to commit the time and effort to a child? Do you recognize that you will need to take maternity (or paternity) leave from work? Are you ready to change your lifestyle for the next 18 years and beyond? Also, it is important to be prepared for all the possibilities, which include fertility issues, possible genetic disorders if they tend to run in the family and also the stress it will put on your relationship. Instead of simply being a couple, you will be a couple AND parents to

another being.

- What is your financial status? This will be covered in depth below. However, you also need to consider the change in expenses when you add another person to the family. Is the vehicle you drive safe and big enough to transport a child? Is there room in your home?
- What if you have twins? It could happen. Especially if there is a history of twins in your family, you need to consider whether you are prepared to have two babies at once, along with the expense and stress that can come with two tiny, demanding additions to the household (6.1)

Also, consider the fact that the routine you have now will be gone. No matter how hard you try to retain the enjoyable way you live life day-to-day, it will disappear when you add a child to the equation. It may get vastly better, and you will not be able to imagine why you enjoyed your previous routines. However, at some point you may miss what you have now. So consider whether or not you are ready to let go of the evenings that aren't filled with another person needing your constant attention. Decide if you can handle changing your regular dining out routine for family meals at home. Also, if there is a pet involved, consider how you will balance having a baby and taking care of the pet that at this current point, has all the necessary attention and probably more.

Financial Considerations

Money is a big factor in any big change to your life. When it comes to having kids, that is a huge consideration. As of 2015, the projected cost for raising a child to the age of 18 was \$304,480. This is based on a report from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (6.2)

That is a staggering amount. Now of course, that amount does not need to be saved up front. However,

if you are still saving toward a home or were planning a big purchase like a car in the near future, a large chunk of expendable income that could go toward those plans will need to be set aside for the needs of the child. That is not to say that money should be the main consideration when having a child. It is amazing the ways you can find to save money or the change in your attitude about money once that tiny person has been placed in your arms and you realize you would do ANYTHING for that little boy or girl. Still, you need to be reasonably sure you can provide the basic essentials before that little one gets here. Once conception occurs, you have about 10 months to prepare. So that does give you some time to budget and plan, even if the pregnancy is a surprise.

If you are at the point where you need to start budgeting, or you simply would like to start saving for when the little bundle of joy is about to arrive via Stork Express, consider the following tips:

- 529 Plans – These tax-advantaged savings accounts are a great way to save for a child's education. Some states require a small amount to open the account, like \$25. Others allow the account to be opened for free. Anyone can help contribute to this account, and they can take advantage of the tax benefits if they do so.
- Research What Items Can be Purchased Second-Hand – Some items, like the stroller or car seat, are best purchased brand new so as to help avoid safety issues like recalls or being sold a car seat that has been in an accident or has expired. However, baby clothes, toys and some items like a breastfeeding pillow or a Bumbo (optional but helpful item) can be purchased second-hand, where you will save money and still get an item that seems brand new. Babies grow fast, so clothes and toys tend to be under used. Then, they are not needed anymore, so they are sold cheap for some fast cash. That way, you benefit from the purchase and so does another parent. That is a win-win situation.
- Be Aware of Second-hand markets online – ThredUp and SwapMamas are great resources to be aware of. You can get great deals and spend a fraction of what you would

by heading to the big baby chain stores.

- Consider Life Insurance – Once you add another family member, the potential loss of income due to the death of a parent becomes a serious fear. To alleviate your fear and protect your loved ones, invest in life insurance. For a relatively low monthly fee, you can ensure that your family will still be able to afford to live if something sudden results in your death. While a seemingly morbid consideration, it is best to be prepared when you are responsible for someone else until they can care for themselves 18 years down the road.
- Work on a Budget – Look at what you have spent in the last few months. Consider what was necessary (bills, etc) and what was simply for pleasure (dining out, clothes or new items that were not necessities). When you have set out a budget with reasonable parameters, you can consider an amount to begin putting away in savings. Again, this is to help in case of job loss or another unexpected issue that will cost a significant amount of money (big repairs for the family vehicle, for example). (6.3)

Children are a blessing. They are a blessing that not everyone opts to include in their lives. However, if that adventure is one you think you are ready to start taking, you can Start Now with the above considerations.

The positive contributions that children make to your life can not be measured with money, time or other physical considerations. Therefore, this is a serious undertaking that can give back in ways that are unmeasurable. Be confident, however, that they are all worth it in the end.

Chapter 7: Starting Now with Starting a Business

Starting a business can be a scary undertaking. You are branching away from a job where all you had to do was show up and do what you were told to a business where you make all the decisions and will be responsible for the jobs of others when the business takes off.

Whether you plan to start a business as a part-time venture or a business that will be the main income for your family, there are things to consider before you start that will help the venture be more successful. Getting a business going is more than having a product and setting up a sign or a web page. A business involves lots of technical aspects.

10 Tips for Starting a Business

1. **Do an Honest Evaluation:** Are you sure you have what it takes to start a business? While having an idea and a business plan are important, so are the character traits that will be helpful in starting and keeping alive a new business. Are you driven, flexible and above all confident that this will succeed? These three traits are important to starting a business. Otherwise, it won't have anyone that is capable of seeing the process through, and that means a high likelihood of failure.
2. **Business Plan, Market and Budget:** Create a business plan, recognize the ideal market for your product or service and set a realistic budget for the various steps to get your business up and running. Remember to start small. There will be time to expand as the business starts gaining attention and bringing in revenue.
3. **Consider Investors:** Setting up a business takes time and elbow grease, but it will also inevitably require some funding. If you do not have the money saved somewhere (which

most people do not), you are going to need to talk to investors. When holding these conversations, keep in mind that you are talking to people who have made money so they have extra to invest in your idea. Therefore, if they have advice, listen to it. They may make the difference in the success or failure of your idea, simply based on a factor that you may never have considered. Their help can come in more than dollars and cents.

4. Utilize All Free Resources Available: Creating a business can take a lot of capital.

Therefore, if there are resources that are available free, take advantage. Look into venues where people may be willing to share advice and where training is available at no cost to you. These areas can be invaluable to you when push comes to shove with your new business.

5. Be Flexible: Regardless of your original idea and the plan that you created, there will be roadblocks or a part of the plan that just does not pan out. For that reason, you need to be able to think on your feet. You also need to be willing to toss out the part that does not work and focus on the part that has potential. (7.1)

6. Control Emotions: Do not get angry when you aren't successful with an initial effort. Instead, talk to the consumers and see what was unappealing. Rework the idea and try again. Also, be patient. Tweaking a new idea takes time. Finally, ignore the negative people who are determined to see you fail or who simply can not grasp what you are trying to achieve. Remember that all new ideas face resistance at first.

7. Do Not Ignore Social Media: Today's society is all about instant results and social media provides that in a lot of ways. If you want information, you turn to social media. Therefore, when building your business, make sure to build a presence on social media at the same time. Advertising in today's world depends a lot on social media. (7.2)

8. Network and Word of Mouth: Both networking with others in the same business category and optimizing the gain from satisfied customers can get your business significant growth. Do both, and use both at the same time. Your business will grow a lot faster if it is

circulating in both the business world and the customer sector.

9. **Provide Quality and High Satisfaction Levels:** In the beginning, it is a good idea to over-deliver to your customers. That ensures they will become repeat customers and also that they will share their great experiences with their friends. That in turn will bring in new customers, and your business will grow. Make sure that for anyone that is not satisfied with the product or service, you resolve the issue quickly and efficiently.
10. **Hire the Right People and Delegate:** Finally, as the business grows, it is important to hire people that you can trust to keep providing the same quality of product or service. Then, work on delegating responsibilities so you can focus on other areas of the business, like creating new products or expanding in other ways.

Research the necessary licenses and other legal aspects of the business as well. Do not fail before you start by ignoring the legal aspects of creating a new business, or all your profits may be lost trying to defend yourself in a lawsuit that could have been easily avoided.

When starting a business, there are some mistakes that affect a majority of new startups. Below are some of those mistakes.

Common Business Startup Mistakes

Below are some of the most common mistakes for business startups. (7.3)

- **Losing Focus** – Starting a business takes a lot of time and effort. You can not be sidetracked easily. Likewise, the project may need adjusted. However, you still need to make the adjustment and be focused on moving forward successfully. Too many times of changing your mind in the initial stages is a death knell for your growing business.

- Overplanning – It is important to create a business plan that addresses the potential issues, so you can show investors that you are prepared to deal with the unexpected. However, overplanning can lead to problems of its own. In order to be successful, you need to create a base plan and be able to think on your feet and adjust as necessary.
- The Wrong Investors – Despite the best intentions, sometimes you pick the wrong investor. They do not have the same vision as you, and that becomes readily apparent as things move forward. If that happens, do not panic. Do the best you can to compromise with the current investor without losing part of your vision. If compromise is impossible, work to find a new investor to buy out the one with a vastly different vision.
- The Wrong Employees – as mentioned above, you have to hire people that are capable of providing the same quality that you were providing as the sole employee. While having family help with a business seems like an effective cost-cutting measure, that may not be the right way to ensure your business becomes successful. Weigh the cost of hiring employees against the potential problems you can face working with family. Sometimes the expenditure is the best move.

A new business is like a child. It takes all your energy and focus initially. However, with time confidence can build, employees can be hired and the business can become a working entity that does not need your heart and soul in the day-to-day operation. Take heart in that this intense process will not take forever. Start Now and watch the idea you have grow into a profitable entity.

Chapter 8: Starting Now with a Do-It-Yourself Project

Do-It-Yourself projects save money. However, if you are not prepared to put in the time and effort to finish the project under your own steam, it may be better to budget for the hiring of a professional to complete the task.

If you are planning to Start Now and do something yourself, there are some things to consider before you jump right in.

Things to Keep in Mind if you Want to Do It Yourself:

- Have the Right Equipment – All too often, people try to do a project without gathering the right equipment first. For most home improvement projects, a certain set of tools are guaranteed to be needed. If you do not have a hammer, chances are your project is going to get held up quickly. Screwdrivers are another item that are extremely valuable to have in the home toolbox. You also should have a pencil and notebook handy for most DIY projects. Measurements are important to building or renovating or other home improvement projects, just to name one example.
- Make Sure the Idea is Clear – Know what you are getting into. Have a clear vision of the finished product. Understand that some flexibility is important, but do not let things go completely askew. You want to install a garbage disposal. Do not end up with a new garbage can instead. Likewise, if you were just planning on setting up a desk in the office, don't end up with recessed bookshelves.
- Be Safe – Consider the task and use gloves, safety glasses or whatever is necessary to minimize your risk of injury. For crafting projects, the necessary safety equipment may be

a thimble and watching how you use the scissors. Still, take an objective look at what you are doing and how to stay safe while doing it.

- Measure Twice. Cut Once – Double check what you are doing. This is a good rule of thumb no matter what type of project you are undertaking.
- Cut a Big Project into Manageable Steps – You can not build an entire house in a day. Therefore, it is best to look at what you want to do and plan it so that you can reasonably accomplish it. Also, be sure that all materials will be protected from the elements if the project requires things to be stored outdoors over a period of more than one day. Even for projects that will done in the home, you can not reasonably expect to tie up the dinner table for a week with materials. Instead, get out what you need for the part you can get done this evening. Store everything away when you are done and get it out again tomorrow to do the next stage. (8.1)

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DIY Websites

There are countless resources that can be found on the Internet for any DIY project you plan to tackle.

Below are a few websites that can be beneficial for beginners to the DIY world:

- Apartment Therapy – This website helps you spice up your décor on a very minimal budget. It allows for storage or a way to brighten any room in the home. The projects tend to turn out a bit fancier than anything you might find on Instructables (below), but it does not lay out the directions in quite the same detail.
- The Family Handyman – This website helps with home maintenance efforts and simple projects you may want to do yourself. It does not come without cost however, as most of the resources are locked until you pay to subscribe.
- Instructables – This website provides text instruction or handy videos to help with any craft project or anything that is home improvement-focused. The instructions are easy to follow. Others have also commented sharing tips to improve the instructions and therefore may help you with issues you face without you needing to ask for help.
- Urban Homestead – If you are looking for help growing food, preserving it or otherwise attempting to be self-sufficient, this website may be a big help to your efforts. (8.2)

Conclusion:

This book is set up to help you face obstacles to Starting Now with multiple aspects of your life. When it comes to big changes, there are going to be hurdles to get over and people that want to bury you in negativity. Even your own tendencies toward procrastination may be detrimental to your efforts. However, with some of the tips covered in this book, you can stop the downhill slide to failure and resume your climb to the thrill of success.

Start Now.

Resources:

Chapter 1

- 1.1 <http://zenhabits.net/best-8-ways-to-deal-with-detractors/>

Chapter 2

- 2.1 <http://www.forbes.com/sites/85broads/2014/04/08/why-you-should-be-writing-down-your-goals/>

Chapter 3

- 3.1 <https://www.psychologytoday.com/basics/procrastination>
- 3.2 http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_96.htm
- 3.3 <http://www.webmd.com/balance/express-yourself-13/negative-self-talk?page=2>

Chapter 4

- 4.1 <http://beginnersinvest.about.com/od/investing101/a/how-to-start-investing.htm>
- 4.2 <http://beginnersinvest.about.com/od/savingsanddebtmanagement/a/how-much-should-i-be-saving.htm>
- 4.3 <http://blog.mint.com/goals/invest-with-little-money/>

Chapter 5

- 5.1 <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/what-is-the-best-diet-for-you>
- 5.2 <http://health.usnews.com/best-diet/dash-diet>
- 5.3 <http://health.usnews.com/best-diet/atkins-diet>
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The Fastest Way To Succeed

***Setting Goals, Inspiring Others, and Achieving
Victory***

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Introduction

This book will explain how you can maximize your success by focusing on other people's success as a key basis for your own success

Looking back in life, sure you must have encountered someone who sees the success of other people as an immediate threat to theirs, or wait a minute, could it be that you are actually that person?

Are you always feeling threatened by other people's success? Do you feel like helping facilitate other people's success will drag you behind; probably even get you losing to them? Whoever might have bred the misconception that 'good guys finish last' in your mind highly misled you because truth be told, 'winners finish even before the game starts'.

Whether in business or personal relations, the opportunities fostered by a helping attitude are limitless and simply inexhaustible! It's almost like the entire universe opens up, flooding with energy for the giver in such a way that he never lacks. Success is about serving other people without expecting them to return the favor but finding awe in their achievements.

In pursuit of selfish ambitions and selfish desires endeavored to deliberately inhibit other people's success, you may find that one keeps lacking success regardless of how much they try. This is because our greatest joy and success in life resides not in relentless pursuits of selfish purposes but rather in utmost selfless pursuit of other people's achievements.

You come to realization that you are thereby purposed to live for something greater than just you, something beyond human imagination, something infinitely divine. The satisfaction that is derived from watching someone rise-up from nothing to something and transit from adversity to strength is an amazing feeling.

Continue reading and allow the content within this book to change your mind set on selfless giving. It will cover the basis that governs success and also offer enlightenment into the untold benefits that comes with giving!

Chapter 1

Sharing Your Goals and Aspirations with Others

Is sharing your dreams a bad omen?

If you think of goals, they are more like the guiding lights on your life path unfolding by marking with essence the various milestones throughout your journey. The goals you set today highly determine how your future will be. So do you tell others about your dreams and plans in life or take caution? Is it true that sharing your dreams makes it unlikely that you'd be achieving them?

Truth be told, the only time that sharing your dreams and aspirations can be self-destructive is when you choose to let naysayers in. You know those people that have the habit of ridiculing or belittling other people's goals? Those people who tend to feel threatened and inadequate or are simply mean are the ones that inhibit your dreams.

So it is up to you to decide who to share your plans and dreams with and if you know for sure that someone will have a negative approach, make sure you tell them everything else but the personal stuff.

You have the absolute control when it comes to your life so when someone deems indeed unsupportive, you have the choice to distance yourself from them or just tune out the negativity.

Sharing is Achieving

You see, as much as publicly sharing your success may sound somehow narcissist, there will always

be inexhaustible reasons to want to boast about your achievements. Sharing your goals and progress towards achieving those goals makes them not just verifiable but very much valid.

In most cases, you find that the reason you are unable to accomplish your goals is mainly because you lack motivation. Sharing your goals on the other hand can be quite liberating and insightful especially with those people who are dedicated towards our success as we are.

Talking and sharing out your ideas becomes more like facilitating the action itself and getting these goals done. So are you asking again why you should share your goals with others while they share theirs too? Here's the catch:-

Accountability- You see sometimes we have dreams, goals that are not about to unfold overnight. Say you would wish to travel to Rome next summer; sharing this with a friend wins you a positive push towards making that dream a reality.

There is no doubt that this friend will want to enquire how your plans are coming along the next time you see each other. This in a way holds you accountable and makes you want to stick to those plans and you'll really work harder towards their achievement. In life, all we ever need is a slight push in the right direction and everything else just comes falling into place.

Vulnerable is good- You see sharing with other people about your dreams and aspirations also gets you sharing about your worries and fears. While negative people may use this platform to try and break you, sharing with positive minded people opens up an avenue for drawing in your strength.

The moment you stop trying too hard to be self-sufficient, you'll be surprised just how much people will be drawn to your vulnerability. They will want to help you, they will open up to you and you'll

end up realizing that inside, we are all broken people and by letting down the veil, we encourage others to follow the same and we all win.

Sharing your goals also acts as motivation- You can bet sharing about your goals acts as the motivation you need. When someone knows about your plans, they get to play the role of enhancing and boosting your will power. You know like when you are unsure of how you'll accomplish your dream of becoming a real estate investor and you share this with someone, you open up doors for encouragement.

They may not necessarily have the exact plan of action but you see the mere fact that they believe in you brings assurance that you can and will. Positive motivation sometimes can awaken such dreams and ambitions that adversity, loss, and failure may have severely invaded leaving awing footsteps of the worthwhile journey for even others to emulate.

It provokes socialization- You see, worrying that your dreams and plans in life stand to be jeopardized simply because someone else other than you is aware of them is a lot of junk. All you need to do is to choose wisely who you share your goals with because another benefit that comes from sharing is social growth.

Taking time to share, to communicate, or to update someone about your plans will establish a key connection. Having a connection with other people remains a better way of advancing as opposed to being in competition with them.

Sharing is a Give-Take Scenario

When it comes to sharing with others about your future plans and dreams, the process should be a give-take approach. In order to best achieve the goals we set in life; we will also need to take interest

in other people's goals too.

Say you decide to share about how you want to pursue your Master's Degree come next year or tap into a different career. The decision to share this with someone should not be self-centered and hence the need that remains to also listen to their goals too.

Remember to make a friend you have to be a friend, to be heard you will have to listen and to achieve success; you will have to help others achieve the same. If possible, the best approach would be to establish some common goals you can work on together. This way, as you help each other become a better version of yourselves in unison; you are also able to tap into and encourage each other's personal goals and aspirations too.

Chapter 2

Sharing your knowledge and expertise with others

Selfishness vs. Selflessness

In essence, selfish people are those that will do everything to make life harder for other people and as for the selfless ones, these will move mountains just to see others succeed.

In short, selfless people give while selfish ones can only take. Someone who uses other people to get what they want, that is outright selfishness! Someone who gets overly angry when things are not going their way, it spells selfishness. Maybe you find yourself being insensitive to other people's feelings and always manipulating them for your good, that's selfishness at work!

Think about it this way; are you more likely to put your needs first or those of other people? If your

answer is the latter, then let's say you are a selfless being. It's not always the easiest decision to put other people's joy and happiness before ours but when maximized, we are bound to reap the same in double portions.

Remember every day is a raging war between love and greed and while one's got to surpass, how you are channeling your energy every passing second is the key determinant. In essence, positivity and selflessness go together because you've got to view the necessary actions to take in a positive light to be able to live it.

Sharing harnesses Self-confidence

So you realize that there is this one thing that you are close to perfect with? Then that is where the zenith of your potential lies. In fact, better believe that there is always someone somewhere who knows less of what you know about something and that this truth here is what makes you an expert in that field.

However, it loses all the meaning if all that knowledge goes to waste because we are too stingy to share it. What use is knowledge that's imprisoned in a selfish mind that refuses to allow others tap into its endless possibilities?

The ability to share your expertise and knowledge with others will never make you inferior, it only helps harness your skills and boost your confidence. In essence, the confidence that comes with mastering a certain art is only experienced when we are able to give away what we know for the benefit of others.

Remember that it's a matter of everyday learning so don't forget to harness your knowledge because in order to be an expert builder, you will need to lay down a firm foundation for others to also build

upon.

Sharing Earns you Respect

The moment you realize that you are the go-to person in a specific field; the feeling can be both thrilling and intimidating. You see it's like being the best student in a dreaded subject like Mathematics or Biology, you know you've just got to anticipate surprise visits from both acquaintances and complete strangers.

This happens because you are in possession of an asset that is rare; this makes you an expert, someone's hero. However, you must admit as a leader or a common human being, being respected by others remains the greatest measure of success.

We tend to work tirelessly to win the respect of family, relatives, colleagues, friends, superiors and mankind at large. Respect from others makes us feel of great importance and it becomes the fire we need to better ourselves.

The moment you decide to share your knowledge with others will make you a soft target for admiration and sheer respect. It is one thing to sweat it out trying to acquire knowledge and another to give it away free of charge.

There is no way you can escape the wealth of respect that comes with sharing especially when your thoughtfulness and giving nature has already placed you on a pedestal.

Benefits of Sharing Your Knowledge and Expertise

The reason you are where you are today and doing what you do today is because you are good at it. In any organization, the people in the highest positions are there because they've got the knowledge,

skills, and experience in their particular field. This automatically makes them great assets for the organization.

Ask yourself, what are you doing with all that knowledge? Are you hoarding it away selfishly as a squirrel stashes nuts or are allowing the bliss to extend to someone else.

So you acquired this knowledge and expertise through sweat and blood, no doubt it wasn't easy, but time and time again, the true measure of success is always selfless giving. Forget the blood and sweat endured to garner this knowledge you possess and focus on the impact it can bring to the entire human kind.

Here is what sharing acquiring knowledge and expertise bring on board:-

- a) **It helps harness what you know-** There is not a more compelling way to instill knowledge better than through effective sharing. Think of how memories are kept alive by constant reminiscing, sharing knowledge helps renew and re-establish it all over again.
- b) **It allows room for growth-** You see sharing your expertise allows you to invite new conversations. With your eyes, mind, and ears open, you are bound to learn something new in the process.
- c) **It marks reputation and authority-** The best way to command respect and earn a reputation in what you do best is through actions. Sure you can go on talking about what you can offer but when you actually get down to it, share your ideas and action plan, there is no telling how much recognition you may receive.

Chapter 3

Sharing your resources and connections with others

There is always something

When it comes to resources, it is not always in terms of material. There is a host of other resources not entirely related to money. Sometimes the resources available to share with other people out there could be in form of a kind gesture, a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on or simply valuable advice.

You just never know how valuable your wealth is until you make the decision to tap into your potential. Again, when it comes to being generous with your resources, think of those reserved tickets for the big game which you are likely to miss out on cause of other commitments, sure you must know someone who stands to benefit. Or maybe the company you work for needs a qualified brain for a certain position and the guy next door has been nursing the bruises of losing his job? This is just the perfect opportunity.

You see, sometimes you will find people hesitate to extend that helping hand to someone in need of that help for the fear of becoming inferior to them. Like when your company seeks a qualified operations manager, someone you know qualifies for the same and desperately needs a job but because this position automatically rates him your superior, you hesitate to help him fearing that you will become a joke in his eyes.

However, if there is one lesson life keeps teaching us time and time again, is that, good is always rewarded with good and its opposite always works on a complete reverse.

Sometimes all is needed is just a little push

Sometimes you realize that the resources and connections available to help someone mark that defining milestone in their lives are simply inexhaustible.

Maybe the reason they are yet to tap onto those resources is because they lack awareness of the available opportunities. This is where you come in, you have the connections, and you know where the untapped potential lies, so you direct them.

It doesn't necessarily have to be a business opportunity; it could even be a potential life partner or some good press. In essence, it is about thinking of someone who stands to benefit when opportunity shines.

You will be surprised just how much potential you hold in terms of connections both social and in business, and how what you know and who you know can impact a person in need.

Is it your valuable time? Invest it on someone!

Your time and availability for the sake of someone else comes off as one of the most selfless, priceless, and effortless actions that greatly impacts others. Let's say you volunteer your valuable time to help a friend in need.

You can go as far as helping someone move to their new home or as easy as doing a guest webinar for your personal contacts. This shows that you are comfortable going out of your way to share valuable experience and offer a helping hand.

You see in life, it is often the simple things that we are quick to overlook that counts. It could be someone close to you has been postponing that checkup with the doctor; it might be something serious so the fear just won't let them make that defining decision.

Give them a little push, offer your time and company, offer them the option to go together for the check up.

Often times the reason we keep living in limitations is not just because we are afraid, it is also because we lack a strong social support group, an aspect that always remains a necessity in life. Just being there emotionally for someone even without any monetary support makes you an icon of inspiration.

Bottom line is that helping others is never easy. Chances are that it will highly interfere with your schedule, take up your valuable money, time, and other resources. However, if you get down to the fulfilling feeling that sharing and giving leaves behind, then all these becomes nullified.

It is at that very moment when you realize that your hall marks with success will only come through selfless giving and unmonitored sharing. Regardless of how much success you may have acquired today, there is always something out there that can help better you. Success is never just in terms of material resources, true success is defined when it can be felt in every other aspect of life and not just our finances.

Using your resources to inspire

People always feel inspired by someone whose humble beginnings helped forge greatness in them. When you share your resources, you inspire others to be just like you. Someone who has lived in their comfort zone long enough feels challenged to step into your shoes because you see there is nothing as moving as a humble giver.

Someone that doesn't hold a price tag over their giving, one that chooses impact over fame inspires such vibrations of immeasurable success. Fame garners you many followers, publicity and exposure,

true, you become some god or goddess but all that still remains vanity without the fulfillment that comes from giving. It is the assurance that comes from being able to make a difference in someone else's life that fuels happiness in life.

Remember kindness is immensely contagious. When you help other people, this spurs them and others to want to pay it back and this keeps the cycle of happiness charging forward. Seeing someone help other people causes us to also want to go out there and make a difference.

Even as a parent, when your kids are able to witness such selfless giving, they aspire to be more like you, they anticipate making such impact too. So this becomes the best inheritance you could ever give them because remember money and fame fades, but an act of kindness leaves an indelible mark.

Do not therefore aspire to be remembered by how much your bank account held, rather let it be from the impact you left through selflessness and inspiration. Instead of intimidating others with how much achievement and progress you've made, use that to inspire them.

Chapter 4

Become Someone Else's Mentor

A Mentor was once mentored

If you stop and look back in life, there must have been that phase in your life when you looked up to someone. A time you aspired to be like someone that inspired so much potential and awe, someone whose life story was worth emulating.

So you kept looking up to this statue, probably you'd also seek advice from them; emulate their approach and strategic plan, made every effort to walk in their shoes. It could be that the reason you are here today, as an icon of admiration to others is because someone once believed in you and gave you the chance to see the world through the eyes of a fighter.

You see in life it is not usually about how many memories we've had; it is about those defining ones that still takes your breath away. It is having the willingness to make a selfless difference in the world, to help and inspire for the sake of humanity.

There is therefore power in the ability to touch the life of another even through the subtlest way. This realization retaliates better the need to work on mentorship, on finding someone to mentor, on making

an indelible impact to society.

Mentorship is Invaluable

Maybe you've ever benefited from mentorship in your education, career, or personal life experiences. This means that you are already aware of the invaluable resourcefulness mentorship spells.

Young minds requires someone to hold their hand and guide them in the beginning of their adulthood, career, or when making education choices. Again you would think that becoming someone's mentor would mean getting to sacrifice for their well being but far from it, because you stand equal chances to benefit too. The rewarding benefits you reap as a mentor cannot compare to those a mentee gets from your mentorship.

Mentorship and untapped potential

Mentoring someone means helping them bring out their utmost potential for their overall success. Regardless of how much success you've achieved today, there is always room to be better because life remains a learning journey. While you get to work with people from diverse backgrounds and personalities, you get to harness your management skills.

Potential that may still be lying somewhere untapped within you gets to be challenged and awakened through mentorship. Again you are able to see life in a whole new perspective and with the sense of responsibility towards your mentee; you are motivated to become the best version of yourself. A mentee is bound to look up to you for skills improvement and self confidence boost. You will therefore find yourself working around the clock to be an icon of their inexhaustible expectations.

Again while you are already an expert and passionate about a certain field, to get the chance of getting someone as passionate and dedicated as you are always escalates you a scale higher. In essence, with mentorship, you can only maximize on potential and there is no telling the heights you can scale and the limitations you can surpass.

Mentorship and Self-confidence

Every day we struggle to find self-validation, we strive to become the best version of ourselves. You can bet that looking at yourself in the mirror won't do your insecurities proper justice but seeing yourself through the eyes of another person, now that just does it.

You've got to admit that for success to surface, there's got to be a great deal of self-confidence tagged along. Mentoring therefore helps in highly boosting your self-confidence, a key aspect when it comes to solving the maze there is with success.

True, it is not always easy to compose yourself, go on believing in yourself even at such times when you feel like a complete failure. But then again you see, being able to believe in someone, investing in someone else's achievements and celebrating them greatly helps better yourself.

Playing the role of a mentor means being a reminder to someone of the value of persistence, strong will and optimism when facing life's challenges. This kind of personality calls for an unshakable level of confidence because remember to bring change in the world; you must become that change you so much seek.

If you are about to impact positively on someone, then you will need to carry yourself in a manner that is worth emulating. Self confidence is one of the defining characteristics of a mentor. It means you get to believe even when life gives you 1000 reasons not to and you get to dare, even when all the odds

seems to be working against you, you get to live a life without limitations.

Mentorship and Broader Networks

You see there is no telling what your mentee of today will become tomorrow. Your value added insight into their lives is no doubt bound to foster them into untold potential breakthroughs and their future can only shine bright. Say your career path lies in technology then your mentee becomes the CEO of HP Solutions in future; you don't just share a mentor-mentee bond, you network in the most beneficial ways.

Not necessarily that they are able to facilitate favors from the position they hold but they are able to extend your connections in the field. Good always comes back to us so every time you decide to do something good, always do it without expecting anything in return but resting assured that fate has a way of calling shots and repaying back in double portions.

Again it is true that at this stage and especially for you to be a mentor, you already have vast professional and personal connections. However, a mentee still stands in the best position to introduce you to people in your level of expertise and those completely outside your knowledge scope. In essence, being their mentor opens you to growth in your social, professional and education networks.

Yes, A Life Changing Experience

Do you know that it is quite possible to make a permanent turn around in someone's life just by allowing them to look up to you and being a pillar of strength for them? For people especially those much younger than you, sharing your skills, experiences and knowledge carried enough weight to change someone's world. The best gift you can give someone is to help exploit their potential and reach for their wildest dreams and imaginations.

Letting someone know that there are no heights too high they cannot scale, giving that much needed assurance, it becomes all they need to keep going. You know that thrill you experience when someone comes back to you much later in life after giving them advice to thank you as they go on and on about how greatly your advice worked?

Sometimes you get used to the idea of knowing something so well and exhaustively so you no longer find it fascinating. Allowing that skill or experience to pass onto someone else leaves a defining impact that still surface long after you are no more.

So yes, life is short, but if you pursue the imperativeness of leaving a legacy, then you and everything you fight for while still a live lives on! Take therefore the initiative of mentoring someone new everyday even in the simplest ways. Give someone enough faith and confidence to get them through their limitations and life's adversities towards exploiting their utmost potential.

Chapter 5

Leading By Example- Leaving Footprints of Success

Seeing is Believing

Leading means having the utmost ability to influence other people's behaviors, thoughts and attitudes. It is all about setting the direction and through motivation and mentorship, helping others rise to the challenge of going after what lies in the path ahead of them.

That you've achieved success to this day may not have come by easily, probably you have had to make untold sacrifices along the way, toiled through sleepless nights, shed blood and tears but all the same, reason why the fruits are all so sweet.

When you set your mind to inspire others on success, you will need to lead them by example, leaving footprints for them to follow only hoping that someday they won't just fit into them, but probably even scale beyond them. As a leader, you are bound to erode trust, a defining element in effective leadership if you say one thing and do another.

Try dictating to someone about what it is going to take them to achieve success and they will want conviction why you think this strategy you are advocating is viable.

The best example will need to be you; they will need to see how you have been there, done it and succeeded. They will need to see it to believe, probably a misconceived kind of reasoning in this day and age but then again, that's humanity for you.

Upholding a positive reputation

There is no way to be considered a great leader given a reputation that has been dragged through the mud irreparably. For people to be able to see value in you, your followed path, your ideas and skills, a good reputation is imperative. Straight from junior school to elementary, leadership appointment even with class monitors and representatives has always been based on credit.

There is that trust and dependency that is provoked by strong leadership qualities of someone with an uprising impeccable reputation which has then led to an enviable success story. Not however to mean in any way that what people think of you is prime towards success, but you see, a reputation can either be built or ruined. Your actions and not necessarily your words are what speak louder.

Remember there will always be haters, those people who will throw stones at any dog that barks.

Yours however is not to be intimidated by such mediocre minds, but rather to use this as fuel, to scale even higher, to surpass possible imaginations.

The best success story is the one written from the raging flames of adversity and woes, because this is where resilience, perseverance and courage find root and thrives to positively influence the rest of your future endeavors.

Surpassing Set Milestones – Actions Speaks Louder

You see upholding the leadership role in every aspect of life can sweep so much positivity on board. Given the fact that you are neither perfect in the very first place, means you are also a work in progress. Leading, setting the path for others to follow and giving yourself selflessly for other people's success, you become the best version of yourself.

As a leader, you need a positive mindset so you are always careful not to breed negative thinking. You are determined to achieve the impossible so you refuse to yield to adversity. You are responsible for overseeing to other people's goal attainment so you get to pursue fulfillment of your own first.

While you are there working tirelessly for other people's success, by the end of the day, you'll be surprised to learn that you've been the greatest beneficiary of your giving and selfless actions.

You find that through mentorship and motivation to other people, the need to become their icon of admiration leaves you determined to crack all your goals and aspirations too. In essence, whenever you lead by example, you become a better version of yourself everyday and you leave impeccable trails of success for others to want to emulate.

So when it comes to leadership, do not just use plain words to mentor, do not just motivate through impeccable speeches, rather make sure that you are living the talk through actions!

Importance of leading by example

There are always those stumbling blocks to success, those barriers that we always have to overcome to finally claim victory. The journey to success is never easy, in fact there will always be a barrier lying ahead of you.

For someone to want to look up to you as a leader, they will need to see courage, resilience, responsibility, perseverance, persistence, a good listener and a solution finder. This means you will have to demonstrate your belief and not simply talk about it. To foster credibility by walking the talk and remember no one promises it won't be challenging, they only promise that it will be rewarding and well worth it.

So do you still need conviction why you should indeed lead by example?

Provokes respect- You see it's one thing for someone to tell you to do something, but another for them to ask you to do what they are already doing. The fact that you are courageous enough to test the waters for someone can only provoke respect.

When someone assures that you won't drown swimming to the other end, gets into the glaring waters and leads by example, you can only salute such courage and self drive.

Helps nurtures relationships- There is this closeness, trust and reliability that is spelt by someone who leads others by example. This is a person who treats people with equality, communicates effectively with integrity and openness. Other people will be driven to share and consult with you simply because you've shown them your intentions are to go all the way with them.

Boosts self confidence- You see those things you'd eventually only contemplate? You realize that the decision to lead other people by example helps overcome limitations and marked boundaries. You find that this daring nature leaves you with improved self-esteem a vital ingredient when it comes to true living.

Motivation and increased productivity- People are often afraid of making the first step from the fear of failing and the reason why there's got to be innovators (you) and adopters (others). Leading such

minds by example brings encouragement and motivates them towards the endless possibilities there are. When they get to follow in the footsteps of someone who's been there, triumphed, overcome and succeeded, then this to them becomes a pillar of motivation.

Trust is earned- People associate trust with reliable actions. For someone to listen to your strategy of how they can succeed or attain a certain goal in life, they are bound to need assurance. Leading these people by example is a great way to provoke credibility as they get to trust in your way of doing what you advocate they do. Again remember for most people, believing only comes after seeing and often the only likelihood of persuading them is through viable actions.

Chapter 6

Emphasizing on Goal Prioritization for Achievement

That they don't just dream....

When it comes to laying out your life's foundation, you know that there are no mountains too high. Again you cannot forget that it is dreams, goals and aspirations that enable you to live a life without limits. So you realize the need there is to dream, but then again you see, you don't just dream, you dream big!

It is saddening however that as we get older, our ambitions seem to further shrink.

Think of the dreams you had at a younger age, maybe you dreamt of becoming a ballerina, a surgeon or an award winning journalist.

Today, as you are there seated on the bus on your way to work or soaking relaxingly in a bath after a hard day at work, you must still be indulging in fantasies, endless fantasies. So you know dreams evolve by day, we cannot stop them but we can work on pursuing them.

It is therefore good to dream and also not just dream, but dream big too. It could be dreams about financial freedom, owning your own business or securing a passionate relationship.

In often times, our dreams start to fade when we come under pressure with being realistic with our dreams but then again you see with just the right motivation and push, we can easily make our dreams a reality today.

Overcoming Mediocre Mindsets

First and foremost no one ever creates a dream in your mind to taunt themselves; they create it so it can be realized. There will always be those expectations other people have of us, if we allow them to rule, we become servants to mediocrity.

It could also be possible that the mediocrity is coming from us, from those self-limiting beliefs we have blocking our progress. Maybe we have been warned about rocking our own boat or asking for help we are to need to acquire our set goals? You find that in often times, self limiting thoughts come from caring too much about other people's opinion and forgetting that we have a mind of our own.

The best gift you can therefore give a person whose mindset has been poisoned by too much

negativity is to encourage positive thinking. Also encourage them towards building beneficial social relationships together with an overall positive outlook.

Remember if your dreams don't scare you, then they probably aren't big enough. Dreams are meant to get us out of our comfort zone so we can test the waters. It is therefore important to make it your responsibility to encourage others to dream and dream big too!

The Need to Prioritize Our Goals in Life

Sure you must already have an endless list of goals brainstormed down on paper. All your goals and ideas are important in some way no doubt otherwise you wouldn't have dwelled so much on them to the point of writing them down.

The list you have at hand may be also getting you a little over excited, feeling like you just can't wait to achieve them, all of them. Do you find yourself getting stuck on which goals to focus your energy on? This here spells the burning need there is to prioritize these goals but then again how do you go about it?

Rate your goals- What is to prioritize really? Is it not placing things or events in order of importance? The first step will be to rate your goals in a scale of 1-10 depending on urgency and priority impact. Know which ones are burning and which ones can wait in line. Again be realistic, if a certain 'goal' is something you can accomplish in a day, then it's not really a goal and it should be ruled out.

Set a time limit- For dreams and goals to have meaning and credibility, there needs to be a specific timeline in respect to their achievement. When is it that you hope to realize these dreams? Say you wish to acquire an MBA in future, when exactly in future? Is it 3 years to come? 5 years to come? Set

a timeline then work around that.

Settle on the priority goal- To implement on your goal's attainment, you really need to outline the top most priority goal, write it down and commit to it. This in essence is going to be the basement, the foundation to achieving every other goal in your list.

Patience, patience, patience- Don't forget that nothing is ever achieved overnight. From the time you set your goals, give them a timeline and then implement them, this becomes the defining moment that you tap into endless possibilities.

However, avoid trying too hard to kill two birds with one stone, because let's face it; you'll lose on both targets. Patience is therefore going to be prime and don't worry if you do not have it right now, it can always be mastered.

Helping others achieve their goals in life

Now the grave importance there is to prioritize our goals in life is evident but it doesn't stop there and having achieved goals you had set at one point in life, sure you can attest to this. That if these remain as just some beautiful writings on a piece of paper, they lose meaning all the same.

Those people that cross our paths in life do not come by erroneously, they do because they are meant to be part of our destiny. To have reaped and experienced great success in life can only be greatly felt when our knowledge, skills and achievements are able to impact on another person.

Your success story came into being because you had people hold your hand at one point in life, guiding you to the right direction. Helping others achieve their goals for most people doesn't happen because they already have it all, rather it comes from the rewarding redemption garnered from doing

good.

When you set out to help other people achieve their dreams and goals in life, every single one of their achievements impacts greatly on your untapped potential. You keep striving to be better so that those looking up to you can aspire for the same. You could call it a win-win scenario, except that you get to win more than through personal gratification, you could say you more like win the lottery!

Putting yourself out there

You'll realize that the moment you set out to be of help to humanity, you tend to attract such skills and personalities that complement those of your own. You find yourself crossing paths with people that inspires you to be better, inspires you to share your knowledge and skills.

However, it won't always happen that the people who need your help are the ones you get to cross paths with, sometimes you will have to take time to find them. If you spot someone that you believe would benefit from your motivation, guidance and mentorship, then dare step in and offer your help.

Refuse however to have a self-centered mindset where you only expect to challenge other people's thoughts and assumptions without allowing yourself to get challenged by them. You'd be surprised to learn just how much room there still is for growth, for learning, for maximum potential utilization.

Chapter 7

Teach others to celebrate their small wins

The time to celebrate is now!

You see most people carry huge expectations when it comes to success in life. True, we all have wild, unimaginable dreams and we can only hope to achieve them one day but then again who can swallow a giant in a single sitting? In fact, who would want that, why would anyone even want to?

Life is too short to live it trying to be perfect and instead of trying so hard to have it all, we need to stop at one point to acknowledge that we are growing and making the very best from our lives.

So you realize that someone somewhere needs to know that their tireless effort is not in vain. When someone looks up to you as a mentor or simply as an icon of transformation and change, they need to see someone who lives fully in the moment.

The next time you are trying to mentor or motivate someone, do not forget to encourage them to celebrate their small achievements today. That it is about celebrating small achievements today and not necessarily waiting to achieve everything to the latter.

Break down big goals into actionable

It is always great to have big goals to aim for both in your personal and career path. However, if the distance between where you are standing this very moment and your goal attainment estimated timeline is too wide, then it's possible you are setting yourself up for failure. Not to be pessimistic, but yes, you will need to consider that as a possibility.

When it comes to guiding others on the best path to success, it is important to encourage them to set actionable goals. Because you see, while ambitious goals can be motivating and utterly inspiring at first, they can get quite intimidating without actionable steps on getting them accomplished.

Remember that someone who looks up to you will be looking out for you to draw the line, to blow the horn, to usher them to elevate. With their already well established goals, why not help them set achievable milestones?

Say the goal is about losing weight, instead of setting a milestone of losing 20 kgs, advice them to start small. By setting small achievable milestones, the ultimate goal's achievement comes to pass in the most motivating and enjoyable way.

The milestones could be set individually and rewarded when achieved. Say you set the first milestone at losing 2 kgs. The moment that milestone is achieved, that victory should be acknowledged, marked, celebrated and rewarded and so should every other set milestone that follows. The most rewarding feeling comes when you are able to see your strategic plan for any goals attainment gain momentum and by the time it elevates and hits the platinum level, the motivation and confidence garnered is immeasurable.

Think of a Growing Plant

Sure you've ever planted a plant, anything. It could be a flower, a crop or even a weed although I doubt anyone would want to plant a weed. Watching it on a daily basis, it is quite easy to get frustrated with the rate of its growth simply because you cannot see it, it's just not there. So you give up checking up on it even abandons the nurturing you used to provide like watering.

However, a week later you pass by its location and it's like you are charmed or simply delirious. The plant you gave up on, the plant you rated so lowly has bloomed tremendously and looks incredibly strong. You see earlier on you had been forgetting that with each passing day, the plant grew a little, widened a little, elevated a little but because you had wanted overnight results, you simply couldn't

see the gradual growth that existed.

The same case applies with success and goal attainment. Nothing can ever work itself out overnight and it is important to remember that every goal and dream can only be realized through hard work, patience, positivity, determination and an unyielding mindset. Someone with the conceived misconception about overnight results can only go on dreaming while reality eludes them every day.

The Power of small victories

You realize that there are those people who wait impatiently for the big wins to finally celebrate while apparently overlooking the small, most significant ones. What they don't know is that this mindset makes them become so fixated on the destination that they forget to enjoy the journey.

It shouldn't have to be so depressing though because in the pursuit for your dreams and set goals, the most liberating attitude that has power to channel your every effort to winning is positivity.

Positivity will mean choosing to see the good in every situation. Let's say you didn't quite achieve everything to the latter this time, but you made a leap of faith and you are not the same person you were before. You are wiser, you are more resilient and the future can only be better.

Maybe the goal you are aiming for has several phases of milestones, each one of them impacts on the other, each one of them is determinant towards the finish line. However, know that victory is not going to be realized the day you are able to hit all the milestones, victory is a progressive process.

You will need to open your eyes to the wonders these small victories tag along. With each milestone being achieved, it puts your progress in a ladder and as you escalate to the finish line, the awing

reality of the far you've come is incomparable.

Rewarding the small milestones

Celebrating small wins allows you to see the innermost strength and resilience you possess and helps you build even more on perseverance and faith. You are able to understand that life is a journey and that just like a plant will not sprout and bloom overnight, so will success.

It is those small, daily progressions we often overlook that bring significance and meaning to the ultimate victory by adding up to the big things. Rewarding these wins becomes even more defining because it serves as a constant reminder of these past achievements every time negative thoughts try to challenge our thinking. Any behavior when recognized and rewarded fosters repetition, efficiency and increased productivity.

The cutting edge is to ensure that you focus your energy on progress rather than dwelling too much on setbacks. Tomorrow is never promised so instead of worrying too much about the milestones you are yet to achieve; it is more fulfilling rather to celebrate those small successes today.

Positive Reinforcement to Overcome Adversity

The Reality with Setbacks

You see many are the times that we hit rock bottom in life, no more aces up our sleeves, so we are left at the point of surrender. When we set our goals in life and with just the best laid plan, it is easy to expect a smooth sail all through. Life however is rather unpredictable; there is no telling what lies ahead. The best weapon towards resilience when going through life is anticipating obstacles and carrying the right attitude to overcome them.

Understanding that adversity is a series of misfortunes all purposed to keep someone from finding happiness and achieving their dreams in life is vital. There is therefore the need to help people understand that adversity being a part of life can only make them stronger, wiser and hardened with just the right mindset to overcome them.

It is never about how clever, sharp or contented you are in life; everyone gets to encounter difficulties, struggles and challenges at one point. Most people however instead fail to see the good in all the struggles, fail to understand that every obstacle and challenge life brings their way only serves to strengthen their confidence, will and ability to face future setbacks.

Building on Resilience amidst Obstacles

When someone is agonizing over their present woes, it is indeed timely to remind them of their past setbacks which they got to overcome. Resilience is therefore someone's capacity to face, overcome and learn from adversity.

There have been inexhaustible cases of severely handicapped people making history through

resilience and positive thinking. In essence, even the most cynical and pessimists cannot overlook the inspiration that comes from such life stories of people that overcame adversity.

Adversity won't have to necessarily ruin your life if you do not allow it to. Rather, sometimes it is such obstacles and setbacks we encounter that help garner us the success title. Helping someone through adversity is one of the most defining acts of selflessness anyone can pursue.

It is therefore important to encourage those people going through adversity on building their internal resources. That during such times that adversity ambush; they should continue to work more on discipline, emotional strength and courage. Being resilient will come from acknowledging that setbacks are inevitable and hence preparing themselves mentally for a confrontation.

The best scenario is that of a warrior going to battle and whose worst case scenario remains his prime focus. He knows that it could get utterly daunting, grueling and immensely ugly. With his armor forged for utmost resilience, he is not afraid of what lies ahead, he is rather prepared for it.

Being someone's way out

In a life where adversity deems inevitable, we cannot overlook the need to have a strong social support group. True, it is important to uphold such resilience and courage when facing life's obstacles but always keep in mind that no man is an island. During trying moments, one is bound to need the unwavering support of family, friends, relatives and possibly a mentor.

You see if you know that someone considers you their pillar of strength whether in their personal or career path, the best thing you can do for them is to not disappoint. Offering a shoulder to lean on and sharing your past experiences similar to theirs brings their worries at crossroads with endless possibilities of overcoming.

As humans, it is easy to get caught up in self pity agonizing over the unfairness there is with life. It is therefore very important to take the initiative of bringing other people in reality with the endless opportunities obstacles and adversity brings forth. Retaliate more on the need to let go of such unproductive and self-defeating thoughts and get down to action.

Providing a supportive environment for other people's success can be achieved through love, support and faith in what they can achieve. Not that they don't understand that there will always be doubters but people needs to know that your place in their life is that of a core supporter.

When someone feels they can trust you to save them when the waters of adversity threaten to drown them, they are able to expel better productivity and zeal, and a combination they will need to achieve their set goals in life.

Encourage others to use Positive Reinforcement

In often times, one may end up feeling like their obstacles and life's challenges are tougher than everyone else's. The reality however is that ordinary humans are everyday expected to rise above their situations, shake off the dust and keep marching forward.

There is absolutely no room for surrender because you see giving up on your goals attainment is just as good as giving up on life itself. Positive reinforcement comes up as a motivating agent where you make the effort to reward your achievements. More than just a reward for an achievement, positive reinforcement motivates someone to hit the set target to receive the price tagged on the goal.

Just like you give a child candy as motivation or reward for obedience or discipline, when it comes to your set goals in life, you need to form a way of positively reinforcing milestones. Say you are

hoping to lose 20 pounds, set certain reinforcement for that milestone. It could be to go on that dream vacation, doing that dream cruise or revamping your wardrobe.

You see whenever one makes the effort to achieve for a price or reward, this serves as unmonitored motivation. Again when the reinforcement is finally received, this now greatly marks this achievement more like it's been entered in the Guinness book of records. Nothing beats the feeling of reminiscing on past achievements and being able to find inspiration to keep fighting.

Chapter 9

Helping others also Greatly Teaches You

Every day is a learning experience

Remember you are not helping other people because you are perfect, far from it because you remain a work in progress. You see helping someone maximize their true potential and achieve success becomes more like teaching. While most people regard learning as only through reference books and a teacher to instruct, the most thorough form of learning is through experience, through teaching.

No one stands better chances to gain more knowledge than a teacher. For them to facilitate a class training, they will need utmost understanding of the particular concept because let's face it, you'll be answering more questions during teaching than you will be asking.

For example, when a teacher is done facilitating a certain lesson and asks out loud whether anyone has a question regarding the same, you see random hands raised up. This means you asked a single question but you'll be answering a queue of them. How do you convince your class that your response is actually viable if you left loop holes while ingesting the concept?

In essence, your pursuit for other people's success is bound to surprise you with bountiful reaps. Not only do you become self conscious and overly alert but you are challenged to leave no stone unturned until you have exhausted your own goals in life.

Even with this much success garnered today, there still exist room for improvement. Instead of residing to a comfort zone feeling like you already have it all, keeping an open mind to learn by

allowing other people to challenge your thoughts and actions. This now allows you to hit two birds with just a single stone. Call it the art of utilization or call it a combination of brains and brawn, cutting edge is, it can only elevate you!

Why do we donate to Charity?

Often, people donate to charity with a common goal, to help save a life. But if you ever find yourself on the ground, one-on-one with the beneficiaries at the time of the donation, then your perception is bound to change.

What we donate in reality can seem insignificant but what we don't realize is that by being part of it, we join hands with many other volunteers and surpass significance. The virtue of giving is even more emphasized in the Bible where you are told to become your brother's keeper. This means that you should seek to fulfill other people's happiness and oversee to their success selflessly.

Volunteering fosters the notion that impossibilities are only self cultivated limitations to our God-given potential. Isn't it awing just how much we are able to impact on others the moment we join together for a common cause. Think of a fundraising event, many are the times that the target set is surpassed by far. Your intent to support the cause becomes the first step and when this combines with the other person's common interest, the fire ignites and there is no telling how much such relentless passion can help achieve.

Donating, giving to others in this regard greatly increases your capacity to love, to value, to appreciate. Seeing life through the eyes of these needy persons gets you on soul reflection, you realize the many reasons you have to be thankful.

When your kids witness you donate season after another, they see your care and concern for others

and great desire to make the world a better place. The seed you sow in them will last them throughout their entire lives.

By the end of the day you don't just give, you get to teach a lot but most especially, you learn, a lot. You learn the possibility there is to alleviate poverty, you learn to be happy just because and not because, you find a cause worth fighting for, simply because you dared give the world the benefit of a doubt.

You know that thrill that makes you feel like you can take on the world, fly on wings like eagles? That is the kind of fulfillment you get from helping others, the humbling feel of a super hero, the ability to tap on limitless potential not to mention the sense of purpose it accords you.

Learning to See the Glass as Half-Full

The reason you know there is no perfection is because you are always learning something new every day. This leaves you certain that there is always room for improvement.

Did you know that people who volunteer and participate in charity work have been seen to have an overall well being and self confidence? This is because through giving, you boost your social connectedness and respectively your self esteem.

Helping provokes a force for good in someone else's life, you emit positivity and rub it on other people around you and overall, you improve not just your interactive skills but your self esteem too.

This positive mindset completely changes your overall attitude and outlook towards life. So now you

learn to see the good in the bad; you learn to see to live life with such optimism that leaves no room for surrender.

You see in life, there is going to be a lot of things you don't like. So what do you do? Do you sulk in misery or do you fight to make sure you leave behind trails of endurance and triumph?

By helping others you are able to come into terms with the things you can't change. You get to learn through other people's experiences the certainty that there will always be a fight ahead of you, an obstacle to overcome or a milestone to achieve and this way you forge resilience.

You know you can try and change things you don't like and if you realize you can't change them, you can then always consider changing the way you think about them instead. It's all about positivity and persistence and these are best harnessed at the cross-roads with self giving and selflessness.

You stay on the lookout for positive signs everywhere, you change your focus on life in general, you learn to have fun and you stop comparing your life with others. You now understand that everyone no matter how happy they seem are fighting their own battle, you become an optimist.

Inner peace and thankfulness

The next time you feel helpless, quite as if you are losing hope in life, try helping other people, try giving. Giving helps clear your mind, talk of stress reduction and abundance of grace. You experience such peace and calm from doing good and this impacts on every other aspect in your life.

In essence there is no regret or downside that comes from giving but instead immense assurance that

you are on the right path. That you get to reflect on your situation, to see how much abundance you have going on and you learn to fully appreciate what you have. You get to recognize what it is that is already a gift, a blessing in your life and find time to be thankful.

The mere essence of existence; that you have food on the table, you are not ailing - in and out of hospital, you can walk on your own two feet, you have the love of family and friends and all the other small little things that you often take for granted!

Conclusion

Thank you again for downloading this book!

I hope this book was able to help you to gain knowledgeable insight on how you can help others maximize their potential. Again, I keep my fingers crossed that the book came by as timely, to revitalize your zeal, hopefully steering you to becoming someone 's mentor.

The next step is to share what you 've learnt, it would be sad if this book managed to impact on you and you cannot afford a minute to extend the bliss.

Thank you once more and good luck in everything!

Embracing the Resistance
*How Adversity Builds
Character and Wisdom*

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Introduction

This book is meant to serve as a guide to overcoming tribulations in life by engaging resilience, determination and courage.

Life remains a journey to an unknown destination. The path is never clear enough, there are never enough clues of what lies ahead, there is no telling what tomorrow holds. To expect a smooth sail in life, no hitches, no pain means rejecting life itself. Because let's face it, problems large or small, are part of life.

There wouldn't be laughter without sorrow, neither would there be draught without famine. In essence, there's always got to be the other side of the coin. The aftermath is not determined by how clever, how well-up in terms of finances or how lucky we are; we will still no doubt encounter struggles, sorrow, hardships and pain.

Given the choice to make, no one would consciously choose to go through woes and suffering. No one would boldly choose death given the choice and if they must, they will still die anticipating someone walks in and reverses the odds. This is because life is precious and amidst all the inevitable setbacks, life must go on!

Again adversity cannot be all miserable, we need to see beyond the blood and sweat, beyond the wounds and heartbreaks, beyond the tears and agony and see the light. They say there is always light at the end of the tunnel. We should therefore learn to pursue the good in the bad, the beauty in the ugly.

Truth be told, you will never really know just how strong and adamant you are unless adversity strikes. Then you learn courage, you build resilience, you learn to persevere, you build character.

Continue reading and it remains my hope that the content here-in is not only able to help you overcome bounds and limitations in life but that it gets you yelling **“Thank God for Adversity!”** is my greatest hope.

Chapter 1

Learning from Your Mistakes – Changes That Needs to be Made

It Starts with Admitting

For many people, the limiting need to be perfect often makes them feel inferior and this becomes a ghost that haunts future achievements. Trying to be a perfectionist bring increased stress and hinders performance. Respectively, embracing your imperfect nature helps see your relationships, personal experiences, emotions and ideas in a less complex view.

Because you know you are not perfect, you are able to come into terms with the fact that you are bound to make mistakes. This way when you screw up, it doesn't catch you off guard that you ought to take responsibility. Most people however will not easily admit they made a mistake, but you need to understand that it is a crucial step in learning and improving yourself.

Admitting to a mistake means refusing to use other people as scape-goats to avoid responsibility but rather courageously owning up to every single one of them. Blaming others distances you from possible learning, keeps you from possible growth!

What we learn from our mistakes

Like they say to err is human and life is full of valuable lessons. So you made a mistake, you are not

the first neither are you the last. It is never easy when someone says “embrace your mistakes”. In fact, it’s not easy to view your mistakes as precious gifts, as gems that they are.

The most important lesson is never allowing your past to dictate your future.

Screwing up will tease you, torment you, test you but ultimately teach you things about you that you never knew. Mistakes make you uniquely you and this is how:-

Mistakes teach us unconditional self-love- Even in the midst of such flaws, being able to laugh at your mistakes becomes self liberating. That you made a mistake means you are not perfect; you never were perfect because you are a work in progress.

Taking away condemnation and judgment helps turn self-loath into self-love. The determination to fix the mistake, the responsibility pursued, the willingness to be better, it can only provoke love for self.

Mistakes brings certainty in what we really want- A mistake becomes the complete contrast of what we really want, desire and consider as success. So you made a mistake okay, this means you did something you shouldn’t have.

There’s got to be that thing that you should have done instead, that now becomes your focus. Fixing this mistake means doing things right, it means stepping into your potential where success now becomes a reality.

Mistakes teaches us to face our fears- Sometimes you realize that even your best idea efforts just comes crumbling down. So you know that success can only be anticipated and is not guaranteed.

When our best efforts fail, we admit that we are stuck; we admit we failed and this takes us directly to

the zenith of our fears. Dealing with the mistakes we made will mean facing possible fears by admitting we need help.

Through mistakes you learn what works and what doesn't- It is not the end of your decision making process just because a mistake happened. It is inevitable the fact that more defining decisions awaits your conscious delegation.

That you made a mistake today becomes a reality check and the most powerful feedback you'd have ever gotten. Through a present mistake, your future decisions will be better informed, propagated differently from those made in the past, those that got you screwing up everything.

Mistakes comes with responsibility and integrity

Often after screwing up, it feels much easier to shift blame. You defend how it was not your fault. However, by looking for our role in the same mistake, taking responsibility makes us determined to do better next time. Again, through our mistakes we are able to understand that even our smallest choices have impact and hence are able to develop integrity in making life's choices. After a mistake made and mended, future happenings are better planned knowing that huge mistakes are often a result of minor errors overlooked over time.

Chapter 2

Using Your Adversity as Strength

Smooth waters? Just hold on that thought.....

Everyone would want to sail in perfection but have you not heard of the saying that says “smooth waters never made skillful sailors”? It becomes therefore not the question of whether a storm will arise, but rather due anticipation of the next storm coming.

Probably the question you should be asking in this case is, what kind of a person you will be when the next storm surfaces? Have you advanced your life skills to counter these no doubt treacherous waters?

You are not a Victim

Many are the times that we focus so much on our failures that we cease to see the good, the achievements. Character is best forged in the blazing flames of adversity. If done right, if maximized for good, suffering can fuel greatness.

Choose rather to see the good in every situation, including the bad situations. Think of a mother who must labor through the birthing process for the sake of a beautiful innocent life inside of her, to be able to enjoy a life together with her baby.

Isn't the labor process agonizing? Is it not a gamble with no surety of the outcomes? To think that you

may lose your baby or lose your life in the process is the last thought that crosses your mind, because your entire being anticipates only the best in the midst of the tough labor.

The same case applies when you are facing a difficult situation. For there to result in a bundle of joy, the labor process must be defining leaving you with a story to tell.

Struggle and Strength

When a chick survives the struggles of the hatching process, this becomes enough assurance that life outside the shell of the egg will also be overcome. No one should relish in a life without struggle, adversity and challenges. This is because these are crucial components of life and respective growth. If you are this person today, it is because you've made it through yesterday's struggles.

It is important that you learn to be conscious about your struggles, be attentive with them, accept them, be thankful for them and see them rather as a valuable opportunity to grow.

The power being broken and shattered brings leaves you stronger, wiser and much better adapted to the inevitable with life. If you are too weak to oversee the end of a battle, you can bet you will never grow beyond the bounds of self-limitations.

Napoleon Hill on the Strongest Oak

Have you ever thought of an Oak tree in the abandoned forest? The large, woody roots of an oak tree emerging through the soil's surface function primarily as anchors for the tree. These roots also have feeder roots sprouting from them. Surprised? Well, now you know that an oak tree has two kinds of roots, the woody and the feeder roots both whose function is to take in oxygen for the tree.

While these roots often continue growing in exposure, this harshly exposes the tree to the inevitable natural and artificial hazard. That sweeping storm, harsh winds, the scorching sun but still, you find that oak tree standing out right there in the middle of all that. Stronger than ever, resilient and sometimes in such amazing awe that beats logic.

Napoleon Hill (1970) “The strongest oak of the forest becomes not the one that is carefully nurtured away from the raging storm and hidden from the scorching sun. Rather, it is one that elongates in the open space compelled to struggle for its very existence against the rains, the winds and the scorching hot sun”

Rising above the odds of failure

Life has never been a bed of roses. It is therefore crucial to anticipate failure at any given time and be bold at it. This way instead of adversity weighing you down, you are already armed with an escape plan.

Let's see, how do you react to a disappointment or setback? Do you become self-absorbed and sulk in misery feeling sorry for yourself or do you dust it off, take a breather and keep going?

There is need to learn to be happy just because, for no reason at all. Not because things are perfect or are going your way but just because you are wise enough to see beyond the imperfections.

Disappointments never discriminate unless you allow them to and about setbacks, they shake you okay, but they can never cripple you!

Chapter 3

Positive Thinking as a Basic Ingredient

What is a positive mindset?

Having a positive mindset means refusing to allow reality and how things work out affect you by maintaining a positive approach to life every time. In life, you'll encounter those people whose life has been a race full of challenges yet they carry that broad smile and are the last lot to agonize over their circumstances.

It is not because the harsh realities never hit them hard, no! The only difference between them and their opposite counterparts is that they chose life and its fullness. They no doubt understand that their thinking today determines not just where they remain today but where they will be tomorrow.

Overnight success?

Truth is, it is easier to remain positive at such times when things are going great in your life. It's very easy to transition from a hard situation to a heartwarming one too. However, the hard part comes in while trying to remain positive and motivated after life decides to challenge you as miserably by knocking you down hard.

That successful entrepreneur relishing in seas of investments and untold net worth also has a story to tell. Sadly when we see successful people we only picture this moment and miss out on the struggle and pain it took them to bring them on a pedestal.

Fact is no one goes through life untested. In fact, every great and astute leader had to overcome such trials and adversities before their present definition emerged. So forget the possibility of overnight success; its possibility only remains a myth that entices lazy bodies.

Positivity and power

It is one thing to understand that adversities in life are meant to be overcome and not simply endured; it's another to have the courage to put those sentiments into action. With the wealth of motivational speakers there is today everywhere you go, it remains evident that people are more stressed and troubled than ever.

Overcoming your adversities requires resilience and endurance. It means carrying a stamina that is able to withstand any storm life sweeps ashore. That you must remain unshakable even in moments of doubts and uncertainty, knowing that it too shall pass.

However, resilience goes hand in hand with a positive mindset too. Your thoughts must be in line with your actions. To be able to get through your trials, you need to change your beliefs and thoughts about the challenges you are facing. Remembering that it's not ideally what happens to you that count, but instead how you respond to what happens to you.

Know that suffering and pain are not meant to derail you but rather to harness you. That also means that you must eliminate self-doubt and fear of the unknown. You can either have faith or fear; else these two cannot sail in the same boat.

What are you really made of?

When all is said and done, what are you really made of? Is it iron or is it charcoal? The moment you are wired through the blazing fires of adversity, when the chips crumble, what lies in the heart of your character? How you decide to roll your dice ultimately determines who ends up laughing. In this case it's just you and your adversities.

Made of iron? Great! That means you are naturally composed so thank heavens for that! The first step is to relax, clear your mind and get yourself to a point where you are in utmost control of your senses and emotions. Get as objective as possible, your life's novel is unfolding, so step back and choose to play the role of the spectator. Quite as if all the drama was instead happening to someone else.

You see having the ability to clearly analyze your adversities through positivity and zeal allows you to see open opportunities to use your adversities for good. So are you going to remain positive in the glare of your doubts and fears or are you going to ruthlessly drag your future success through the muds of negativity?

Building a Positive mindset

Sometimes positivity just blossoms naturally but often it is cultivated. Optimistic people stand better chances when it comes to handling challenges, change and the inevitable with life. While it may not be possible to change the challenging situation you have today, you can choose to approach it all with

positivity. This can therefore easily be achieved by taking the initiative to challenge such negative thoughts when they surface and improving your overall perspective of life.

Here's how to build a positive mindset:-

a) Identify the negative

Breeding awareness is the core ingredient when it comes to controlling your thoughts. How about you try and take inventory of how things around you happen, how you react to them ranging from your work, school, social and family environments. The conscious understanding of your reaction to various stimuli's helps you to pay attention to the inner voice in your subconscious. Know that awareness is the basic foundation for any healing process.

b) Positive affirmations

Did you know that words carry more weight than even actions? We use words to build ideas, conversations and respectively actions in the long-run. So ask yourself this question. How much positivity do you induce with the words you utter?

Considering that words said are initially designed by the thoughts you harbor in your mind, you need then to replace negative words with positive ones to derive positive actions, to succeed!

c) The past is gone

Often we keep agonizing about the mistakes we made in the past, choices we made or didn't make and things we didn't or didn't do.

The past is gone and there isn't much you can do to erase that fact, but there is a lot you can do to reverse the odds in future.

You've been given the chance to learn, to be better. Why not just focus on the future and again without trying too hard to author its fate.

d) Your circle of friends

Wait a minute, who are your friends? Is it that gambler who takes every chance to seek validation from how well he can roll the dice because he lacks confidence? Is it that nosy neighbor who gossips about everyone including herself? Is it that woman next door who keeps herself buried in fear of facing the world where every passing woman 'could be her husband's lover'? Is it that boy next door who'll stop at nothing to satisfy his 'man-ego' by sleeping around with every girl within reach?

People that you choose as your friends should be those that rub in bewitchingly infectious positive vibes. Choose such people who energize you, who challenge you to be better and who complements you.

e) Avoid self-comparison

We are all different and the moment you make the mistake of comparing your life with other people's, then you start living in limitations, you start living as if tied to a leash, oppressed and with no one to set you free because you are your own oppressor.

Instead of trying so hard to be someone else, do everything possible to be uniquely you. You can bet there will never be anyone else deserving your emulation than yourself.

Practice lots of self-love by seeing yourself as good enough without the need for anyone's approval. Life is too short to keep chasing shadows so start living in reality, living in today!

Chapter 4

Invent a Powerful Support Team

Not Just Life Skills.....

When it comes to enduring and finally overcoming difficulties in life, no doubt life skills comes in handy. You've therefore got to be tough enough to make it through the storms and always have an ace up your sleeve.

In essence, you've got to be your own super hero. Motivational helpers teach us to understand the norm that everyone else is busy trying to save their own fate and that it's either us or ourselves. But is it always the case? Are we really that well armed to hold it down any time any day?

Life skills are a plus, a core recipe in overcoming adversity and a must have. However, even with the best harnessed resilience strategy, we cannot overlook the fact that we are human without super powers. Only a super hero can go testing all depths of waters and enduring the fate without needing someone to save them when drowning threatens.

You'll Need Help at one Point

So what is a social support network? This is a beneficial network of family, friends and peers who surface as a strong pillar of strength when adversity strikes hard. Having the support of close relatives and friends acts as strong pillar of support in such times you find yourself at the verge of breaking down.

A strong social support network comes in handy as your independent body. In fact, a support network impacts not as just a pillar in times of trying times but having someone to help you overcome stressful times has health benefits too.

Unlike a support group, a social support network is something that can be bred prior to any particular onset of stress and it needs not be formalized through meetings but only through casual voluntary interactions.

Building Your Support Network

You'll need to exercise caution when choosing your social support network. Make sure therefore that these are people you feel comfortable around. People you are comfortable with their beliefs, their practices and influence.

Again, it shouldn't happen that when you are in desperation and struggling hard is when you go building your support network, you need to keep in touch with them even when things are going on well.

Be very careful with negative friends or relatives whose role is to sink your ship even deeper. These will not only manage to waste your precious time incredibly so but will also leave you all drained and miserable. Such is the kind you need to start weeding from your circle of close friends and relatives if you are about to successfully endure and overcome your adversities.

The beauty of sharing your Worries

The biggest problem with problems in life is that they don't unfold one at a time. Rather, they often

appear in clusters, funny but they seem to carry puppies with them too. After taking care of one, another pops to replace it and it's not unusual for someone to find themselves at crossroads wondering what they ever did to deserve it all.

It's not Karma, and you're not being punished; it's just the inevitable odds with life. Combining the economic hassles and now the drama with life's adversities can bring you down to a low point.

At a certain point a quick fix cannot change the facts but what if you let someone else in on your worries? True, they can't take away the worries you have but they can help make the situation better. Given that those people you encircle in your social support team are people you love, if someone loves you back they will no doubt want to help you deal with your dilemmas and woes.

Benefits of having a strong social support team

Talking about your issues helps shed some light on the possible solution, more like therapy, now personal therapy. Knowing that someone's got your back and that assurance of emotional support can make incredible difference during most desperate moments.

Your psychological well being is highly impacted by the presence of supportive relationships. Here are the underlying benefits that come with harnessing a powerful social support network:-

1. Brings a sense of belonging

Not only does spending time with other people help to ward off loneliness, spending time with positive and valuable people in your life helps find better ways to channel your worries and cares instead of bottling them up.

2. Boost self confidence

Having such people that are willing to be in your life voluntarily and unconditionally

communicates value in respect to you.

You've got to be a really good person for them to want to be associated with you. This realization helps to reinforce both self worth and self love.

3. **Acts as security-** A strong social support network allows you valuable access to advice, information, guidance and all sort of needed assistance any day, any time. Knowing you have people you can unconditionally look up to in times of need offers such comfort and assurance you need to keep going despite the situation.

Chapter 5

Growing a Tough Skin- Life is never Perfect!

Resilience at its Best

From the fact that change is both unpredictable and inevitable to the glaring nature of gain and loss, it becomes almost impossible to evade adversity. Resilience is therefore the ability to successfully adapt amidst all possible disasters and threats to humanity. It is the capacity a human being possesses to withstand catastrophes and stress.

Think of earthquakes, tornadoes and other natural calamities. While they can all be devastating, the affected communities and individuals are able to rebuild their lives and go on living.

Resilience isn't about experiencing a smooth sail without pain or stress; it's the ability to experience grief, sadness, disappointments, suffering and pain through loss and adversity. The resilience path lies in working through such emotions and stress effects towards finding a solution every time.

Positivity as fuel for resilience

You should know that resilience and happiness have so much in common. Those people enjoying positive, close relationships from their social support network are better equipped to deal with adversity and stress. This is because they get to derive as much satisfaction and joy from these relationships every day.

The state of being happy is seen when you are feeling more positive emotions than negative ones. It happens when you are able to derive satisfaction and meaningfulness from your life. So no, it doesn't

mean a stress-free life or a life free of adversity, understand that most happy people feel as much pain and suffer as much as those feeling unhappiness in life.

You see positivity and endurance must go hand in hand. As ironic as it may sound, most positive emotions surface because there was once negative emotions. For instance, compassion and forgiveness comes as a result of being wronged or emotionally hurt.

Creativity and flow are cultivated by countless instances of failure and immense risks taken. In essence, having developed resilience means you experienced both the good and the bad and are still standing strong with your head held up high.

What doesn't kill you.....

Looking back in life at past adversities you managed to overcome; surely this cannot be worse than them. Growth is not determined by past mistakes, in fact, it is better facilitated by that. Cognitive appraisal is a resilience prescription that involves looking at your present adversity positively and reframing it.

This means assimilating the challenges and suffering into your life view and moving past that. Assimilating the odds into your life doesn't necessarily make them part of you neither do they get to define you in any way; it offers rather an avenue for growth. We call that post-traumatic growth and you can still bet your entire fortune on that fact that what doesn't kill you only makes you stronger.

This again doesn't mean that the end of your failures or adversities has come. Far from it as there will be future disappointments and reminders of past trauma. Choose to see everything in the positive, as a growth opportunity.

No one grows to reaching their full potential without failure, no one ever has. The point is to never yield to failure or disappointment, the point is to keep pushing forward.

Keep Going, Its only Temporary

The harsh reality is that we shall face difficulties as long as we are in this human form. Whether with work, family, finances, relationships, or peers, tough times are inevitable. The secret lies in never allowing hardships to discourage you by understanding that it is only short term.

Knowing that whatever has a beginning must have an end helps breed positivity and faith. Ever heard of the saying that goes, “Tough times never last, but tough people do?” Well, you can bet no one knows the depths of their strength until they come face to face with adversity. Luckily, it is not the strongest of the species that survives adversity but rather the most intelligent and responsive to change.

It calls for knowledge of what it takes to persevere, it takes a tough character, and it takes a hardened heart to pain. There’s just got to be hidden opportunities amidst the adversity, pursue that and all in all, keep your head held up high. It is as easy to be tempted to give in to adversity and exhibit negativity and that’s why it’s important to keep reminding yourself of your goals, why you must keep fighting.

Characteristics that defines a resilient person

Sure you are wondering whether you fall into the category of the resilient personalities. As we’ve already learnt, resilient people are the complete opposite of pessimists.

As a million dollar personality trait, they are those people who see their mistakes and failures as valuable lessons and as opportunity for growth. They never let their flaws define their self-worth or

abilities; they are champions after the biggest price, their sanity!

Here are traits that define a resilient person:-

- a) First and foremost, a resilient person has a positive approach towards life. It is the one who knows the past is gone and only envisions better days ahead.
- b) A resilient person also has solid goals that are not altered by circumstances not to mention a strong desire to oversee their achievement.
- c) A resilient person boasts of compassion, empathy and cares less of other people's opinion towards him/her.
- d) A resilient person sees every challenge as an opportunity to be better and not a paralyzing event.
- e) A resilient person knows the limits with such situations they cannot control. Instead of seeing themselves as victims, resilient persons focus their time and energy on what can be done, what they have control over.

Chapter 6

Be Grateful for the Good Things

Living as if life was a miracle

If you did not know the in-depth meaning of gratitude, it means acknowledging simple pleasures, counting your blessings, it means being utterly thankful. Gratitude means learning to live life as if everything in it was a miracle.

In essence, finding time to be grateful makes you a much happier and resilient person in all aspects. Thankfulness also helps strengthen relationships, helps reduce stress and impacts greatly on your overall health. When facing challenges and adversity in life, you will be surprised the depths an instance of gratitude can scale tagging along untold comfort and assurance.

Sadly though, we are incredibly forgetful and often tend to overlook all the good we have going on in our life whenever adversity approaches. You see to say you are grateful isn't to mean that everything in your life is just perfect; it just communicates the fact that you are aware of your immeasurable blessings.

Being grateful even as things are not going your way shows a spirit of life appreciation. No matter how things turn out, refuse to live in regrets. Think of the inexhaustible things in life that helps brighten your day. A smile from a stranger, catching up with an old friend, accomplishing a challenging task, feeling loved and appreciated or finding fulfillment in your job... the list is endless.

So now you realize that almost everything in this life that makes us truly happy comes with no charge at all. The most important thing to do is to be mindful of these things.

Complaining is a waste of time

Do you find yourself complaining much, probably a little bit too much in that regard? Looking back, what does your complaining ever achieve? It is true sometimes we complain while completely oblivious of its happening.

Often, you find that most people who constantly complain about their lives harbor a lot of negativity. They always look out for the bad and ugly and always miss to spot something good when it sprouts. It seems for them complaining comes across as the easiest thing to do in times of difficulties but this mentality only inhibits future success and keeps open wounds exposed to further menace.

Fixing a problem always seems more tasking than complaining and playing the blame game to someone with a negative mindset. A positive minded person however finds homage in the ability to reverse the odds with a challenge and complaining is the last thing in their mind.

Say you have a yard full of roses, given the warmth roses compel; does it now seem easier to complain that the rose yard is full of thorns or to be happy that the thorn yard has roses? It deems therefore indeed time that you ditch those negative thoughts and chose to focus on finding a solution.

Extravagance vs. Those Small Little Things

It is quite easy to become immune to those small little things we've got going well in our lives. We find that we yearn so much for extravagant achievements and often material satisfaction and this pair often overshadow the priceless little gems in life. While pursuing the quest to reach the "highs" we can easily lose sight of the fact that everyday life is full of great miracles all unfolding one after the

other.

Learning to appreciate those things that you regard norm plays a gigantic role when it comes to dealing with adversity and stress. You find that you are able to derive peace and happiness from the smallest, tiniest happens and you become completely liberated from worry.

Failing to acknowledge and respectively appreciate those little things breeds certain intolerance to happiness and the fullness of life. You see when your attention and energy isn't focused on what is right, special, mystic and beautiful, then you will dwell more on the impossible, the wrong and irritating stuff.

You find yourself looking out for possible problems and failures rather than anticipating those small happens right within your touch that possess power to sweep aboard immense joy.

Your Habit Becomes Your Prophecy

When you focus your attention more on what's going right with your life, what's special and precious, the payoff is more than enticing. You experience magic by just your very existence and every moment becomes worth to treasure. You stop complaining of the garbage dumped by the road side because you see the beauty of trees and hear the beautiful melodies of the birds when you look that direction. Eventually, your habits becomes self-fulfilled prophecies, you start claiming life and its fullness.

You've just got to stop and consider that person lying frail on their death bed, knowing any minute, any second life will be no more for them. That person is already resolved to the fact there is no more hope, that person would give anything just to be able to walk in your shoes, just to live!

As a gratitude challenge, think of the air you breathe, that you can see while someone else somewhere

is blind. Think of the fact that you slept last night and saw today's dawn, someone else passed on the same night. You are surrounded by love, a loving spouse and adorable kids, not everyone has that! You walk to the refrigerator sure that there is something to bite every time, someone else is going hungry day in, day out. You can stand and move around whenever you want, someone else is bed ridden. You have clean drinking water; someone else is dying of dehydration and thirst. The air you breathe is because God has been immensely merciful.

In essence, everywhere you look around you, you are surrounded by such things that are not there because you are as deserving, but because of some indescribable favour and might. Don't go taking things for granted, even the slightest that comes down to nothing in terms of money, because it is those things that money can't buy us that we can't live without!

Chapter 7

Seek Role models- Those who've dealt with Similar Situations

Victory Awaits, Keep Going

You see this situation you find yourself in right now, it's only temporary and you are not the first one to be tried and tested. Embrace the awareness that adversity is inevitable in the life of a mortal and let that awareness mark the beginning of change. If you keep resisting the odds you allow them to persist, you allow them to gain momentum, and you accept defeat.

Let's be realistic, is there one single corner of the world where struggle and pain have never been felt? With such disasters as the tsunamis, tribal and border wars, floods and other natural calamities, it beats logic that anyone would expect a life without strains.

Even with the best social support and everything going on well in your life, you still get to be touched by the cruel hand of death, tragedy and loss. All you need to remember is that as painful as life can get, the choice is yours whether to suffer or endure.

Finding Support through Adversity

Nothing beats the liberation a strong social support connection spells. Knowing you have the unconditional support of family and friends at all times helps face life with a different approach.

Adversity can lead to adverse reactions that are not unusual with any overwhelmingly stressful situation. Feelings such as sickness, denial, retribution, inactivity, anger, fear and even guilt are commonly associated with adverse situations. Sadly, these feelings only manage to worsen the situation while greatly impeding on possible recovery.

However, what most people still don't understand is that, we all have control over adversity. In fact, we are somehow conditioned by how other people directly or indirectly connected to us respond to unpleasant circumstances. This becomes the reason why you hear of people especially teenagers finding time to seek motivation in their role models.

You see role models are important in any culture. To have someone you can admire and look up to and whose example you can follow is important, timely indeed. A role model however doesn't just sprout and it's not someone you select on impulse. This needs to be someone who breeds positivity and one the same note leads a life worth emulating.

If possible, emulating someone who has dealt with adversity and overcame in the past is the best resolution. Someone who triumphed over life's adversities and instead of surrendering to them ended up leading a productive, successful life.

Let's say you spot that someone who's battled with cancer, someone abandoned during pregnancy, someone who've never known the love of family, someone who lost their sight or hearing, someone who lost their ability to walk. The first thing that comes into your mind is admiration; you can't help

but sink in awe of their endured tribulations, perseverance and deliverance.

In essence, let your role model be someone who's battled adversity and conquered. It is their resilience, their determination and persistence that enabled them to scale past their adversities and prevail. If such people could have done it, surely you are neither made of ice or charcoal to yield to the flames of adversity, you too can overcome!

The Great Successors Had Prime Motivation

It starts from a young age; you became the person you are today because you had the influence of role models, someone you always looked up to. At that age it could have been a teacher, a parent or a sibling.

Still, sometimes when we lack much influence from those people around us as in the case of those who grow up with mean parents, our role models becomes fictitious characters. It could be a celebrity or a movie super star, someone whose role play made you feel the good there is in the world. So whoever these people had been, you had wished you'd be like them one day, be able to live and walk in their path.

To this date, those people you see out there that are always striving to be a better version of themselves share one thing in common, they boast of having role models in their lives.

Adversity calls for self improvement in every aspect and the presence of a role model manages to evoke just that. In fact, people rarely improve when they lack a better version to emulate.

Benefits of having a role model

Role models don't just teach us, they motivate and challenge us to such extents where we are able to

uncover our true potential and overcome life's limitations. If you manage to choose wisely and your role model manages to fulfill their role in making you a better person, you can enjoy multiple benefits that come with having a role model including:-

- You'll try to copy their qualities and practice them as much as possible and this gets you harnessing vibrant traits like discipline, positivity, courage, self-confidence, dedication and compassion just to name a few.
- By emulating a role model who's struggled with a fate as similar as yours, then chances remain that he/she will provide the best possible solution to your problems or simply help you to see the good amidst the tides of adversity.
- A role model may help you change your entire outlook on life and this kind of change has the magnitude to forge you to even becoming someone else's role model.
- Role models are neither without flaws, when we indulge in the quest for the things they had to suffer to forge this eminence they carry today, our problems becomes like tiny drops in the ocean of endless possibilities.

Choose Wisely,

While selecting a role model that is going to help put your thoughts and actions into the right perspective, you need to make the right choices. Don't base your selection on fame, but base it rather on character. Some of the most popular celebrities today are the opposite of role models; many are anti-models, lost sheep in need of a shepherd themselves.

Here's what you can look out for:-

- Look for people who've achieved similar results as the ones you are hoping to achieve.
- You can make your role model someone who struggled with the same challenges as you

are experiencing and find out how they overcame them.

- You can also find someone with a fascinating, awing life story that brings immense motivation and uplifts you indescribably.
- Depending on what you are struggling with and if the struggle is because you are in lack of it; look for someone that has that. It could be discipline, patience or self confidence. Mimicking this trait in your role model teaches you to have the same too.

In essence, it is all up to you to know exactly what it is that you are looking for then pursue it in all the right avenues. Surely you are not about to meet your role model in a late night club or a casino right? The way of life of your prospective role model needs to speak of morality in abundance.

There is also no limit to how many role models you can have so it is therefore quite okay to emulate people within the many diverse departments in life. Ranging from career, relationships, family and many others, there are many aspects in life that requires the right sailor, the right map and just the right ship dock.

Chapter 8

Read insatiably on self improvement

Reading not a Hobby? Not to Worry!

Does it take you decades to want to walk into a study room and engage yourself in some good reading? Well, in this case it deems certain that reading is yet to become a hobby for you. So you are not an avid reader, that's okay. Remember not all hobbies come with the mere existence; some are nurtured, and cultivated and so can reading.

Understand therefore that there will always be those that read as a daily dose for them and those that read because of circumstances. Like let's say your marriage is crumbling down, are almost out of aces so you resort to finding solace in a book that gives guidance on how to save a failing marriage. Regardless of the fact that you can't remember the last time you read a single line in the newspaper, you get to read this one because it deems imperative.

However, there is that other kind of reader whose sanity depends on comprehensive reading. A good book is always comprised in their shopping list; for this one, reading is deeply engraved in their skin.

Reading; Cultivated and Nurtured

So have you lived on the notion that people read as a hobby too long to accept a different version of

the same? That's a lot of brain washing right there but thank God you still have a mind of your own.

Let's see, what is a hobby? Isn't it defined as something you love doing? How do you know that you love doing something? Isn't it as a result of prolonged habit of doing it again and again that harnesses such fondness and voluntary commitment? You see, reading just like any other hobby is a habit, harnessed and nurtured to brew an irresistible bonding and liking.

At this point, you should know that at any one time you can choose to make a certain habit your hobby by cultivating and nurturing fondness towards it. Reading isn't an exception; the most avid writers first acquired the habit which is what they nurtured over time to become a great fondness which then translated to being the 'hobby'.

Just like many other goals we have in life like losing weight, falling in love or nailing that dream career, the satisfying thrill that comes from their achievement remains the cutting edge. Think therefore of reading as a goal, work on achieving it, nurture it and in time you'll realize that you read not because it's a hobby but just because it's a cause worth pursuing.

Focus on Inspirational Reading

Presuming you are now scaling closer to becoming an avid reader, sure you can hold down a good book at this junction right? With the immense talent growing daily, there is inexhaustible inspirational material everywhere you go.

You see, most people due to the demanding life today prefer to take a sneak preview of online blogs.

Don't take this personally because blogs are great and carry deep and valuable insights; also very easy to incorporate any time of day, but books, they irrefutably play the complementary role on blogs every time. Books give you a much deeper in-depth focus, helping you step up a mile in your thinking.

Amidst life's challenges, taking refuge in inspirational reading serves as a strong pillar that encourages perseverance, endurance and overcoming. Reading something motivational first thing in the morning can be a great head start. This means that your reading won't be squeezed out by those other things demanding your limited time of day.

During lunch hour, instead of watching YouTube gags, why not indulge in a good book? Steal an impeccable half an hour, lounge on a park bench or wherever you feel comfortable and hibernate into a different world.

Still, reading acts as the best way to close a hard day of work. This not only helps 'switch off' from the work mode into relaxation but it is often at this time where reading isn't competing with your other commitments because the only thing you are looking forward to in your schedule is some good sleep.

Self Improvement Reading through Adversity

No doubt we will keep facing adversities in life, sometimes such that is easily manageable and sometimes such that needs a legendary game plan to overcome. While struggles and woes are inevitable with life, hope lies in having enlightenment on what to do to make these times easier.

Think of reading for instance. Someone will attest to the deliverance that once came with holding their very first self-improvement book in their hands. For most people, at that defining moment, they

experience a baffling realization that their fate was not laid down in stone and that they could become their own coach and drill master.

Motivational and self improvement books are set out as a training course that leaves you compelled to overcome. All you need to do is to listen to that voice speaking gently to you, that voice that communicates the fact that things could always be worse, but aren't. Self improvement books helps you to see the very best version of yourself bringing self-awakening of such strength and resilience you never knew you possessed.

Self improvement reading helps you see challenges as not just misfortunes threateningly outside your comfort zone but rather as valuable assets that helps define and complement you in the long run. In fact, the greatest achievers wouldn't have made it to a pedestal of such unyielding fame and admiration had they not gone through the igniting flames of adversity and pain.

Again, with self-improvement reading material, you get to stimulate your creativity while indulging yourself in actual steps to take through unconventional tactics. You are initiated through success tactics of the great masters of endurance.

Through application and adaptability of such actions and resolutions that worked out for others, this inspires and sharpens your thinking towards an even better solution. Be aware though that most people blinded by too much ambition tend to get ensnared by schemes that dictate on quick money acquisition ideas.

Regardless of how much financial adversity you may be experiencing, don't waste your time on such content trying to brainwash your mind to thinking that there are overnight get rich schemes. Not only will this kind of thinking completely weigh you down with disappointments, but it also acts so

mercilessly on your optimism and zeal. There has never been such thing as an express path to instant wealth, neither will there ever be!

Chapter 9

Be Determined and Persist to Overcome

Break Down or Gain Momentum

Persistence is seen in the ability and willingness to keep going amidst challenges and life's misfortunes. This attribute greatly helps in achieving professional, personal and academic goals. Role models too play a significant role in helping us develop persistence and also apply relentless effort towards achievement of our set goals.

In the face of adversity, persistence is the definitive difference between a failed outcome and a successful one. This awakening no doubt prompts us to want to harness the virtue of persistence. In such trying moments, you realize you reason like on autopilot making it a natural reaction to want to lower your angle.

However, regardless of how many road blocks you encounter in your path, don't ever be tempted to lower your expectations or goals for the sake of that particular part of your life. As a lead warrior in your life, you cannot back down from your goals just because the going got tough.

Persistence through Faith

The Bible describes an instance where Jesus rebuked a storm that would have swept his disciples ashore. Note that amidst the adversities with the storm that threatened the lives of these men that had become Christ's followers, all they had required all along was faith, which would have been enough.

I am inclined to think therefore that what Jesus meant when he called his disciples men of small faith was that they were too weak to persist, persevere and endure despite having witnessed the many miracles Jesus had performed. In a broader perspective, it also feels like the spirit of fear was also being rebuked since the disciples chose fear instead of trusting in the power Jesus had to bring everything under control.

This teaches us further that the persistence of our faith shall lead us to overcome all adversities, troubles and challenges in life. The only way to overcome trials and adversity in life is therefore to practice persistence through faith. To remain hopeful in the middle of the storms, to keep charging even when the target fades to remain unbent even as tribulations keeps slapping in on our sanity.

Never Yielding, Never Bending

Instead of seeing adversity, choose to open your eyes wider to diversity. See rather how far you can scale, how far you can thrive, how much you can learn and how much you can grow through adversity.

While you must have already embraced the odds with adversity, it also means that you are open to

possible suffering. However, ask yourself this question; if you suffer and triumph, will there be victory in the end?

It's not always easy to welcome setbacks; hence the secret is to refuse to yield to them but rather to use them as building blocks for your self-acclaimed tower of success. Don't live on the lookout always hoping for someone to walk in and redeem you. Instead, choose to play the role of hero in this fairy you are just about to write.

Hero's are made through tears, sweat and blood. It's not going to be easy because you see, life remains a struggle. It will humble you severely; attempt to break you down every chance possible and just when you are gathering muscle to rise in vigor, it will smack you down ruthlessly and needlessly, because life is never fair.

Your role to play is therefore not to bend, not to yield, to not succumb to life's brutality.

The greatest achievers of all time are the ones that make history and let's face it; it is that part of how their triumph redeemed them that we find ourselves reading over and over. It is their triumph, persistence, perseverance and resilience that make their story so awe inspiring and great.

How to Develop Persistence amidst Life's Adversities

There is not a time that success ever came cheap. In essence, if we want to succeed in life we cannot downplay triumph expecting it to be a smooth sail. This is because adversity and triumph form a

connecting bridge to success.

Therefore, if ever you must pray, wish or hope to overcome adversity, pursue the enlightenment that comes with having the trait of persistence plus the determination and will to ensure to the very end.

Lack of persistence remains the reason why success is often garnered by just the minority few and you can bet within this minority group, the one determinant thing these achievers have in common is persistence.

Here are tips that helps develop persistence:-

a) Define your goals

You cannot achieve anything without setting goals, so determine what it is that you really want to achieve.

This helps you remain focused throughout adversity because despite how many times you fall, you keep going until you reach your target as it now becomes your motivation.

b) Anticipate setbacks and obstacles – Along the way, know that there will be setbacks and obstacles and respectively prepare for them.

Remember that failure is important and you should see it as an opportunity to bounce back better and more resilient and not a hindering block to your aspirations.

c) Initiate through actions- You cannot actually succeed in doing something until you

initiate it. Procrastination and fear often keep us from daring to achieve things. So it is true you will not fail if you don't try, but neither will you achieve.

d) **Brew a strong support network**- No man is an island remember? There's got to be someone you can turn to along the way to help set your goals right. As much as resilience at work always complements success, nothing beats the power of positive reinforcement in the tides of hardships.

Someone that you hold in high esteem and one you look up is most likely as committed to see you succeed as much as you are determined to claim your victory.

e) **Don't lose track**- You will need to remember that it is always when you are the verge of giving up that success is about to be clowned. Therefore keep focus on the big prize and avoid getting caught up in negative thinking whatsoever.

Losing focus at this point will be like creating a whole new obstacle. It will be like starting all over again, losing the points earned so far including the bonus points.

Chapter 10

Seeing Obstacles as a Stepping Stone

Stumble but Remain Standing

Character cannot be realized in the land of milk and honey. In fact, if you were to take a queen to a peasant's home, chances are she will not live to see another dawn. Her immune system is not just delicate but her adaptability is weak not to mention that her survival is also conditioned quite as if on autopilot.

Reverse the odds however and take the same peasant in a queen's castle, he can only thrive in all aspects. This retaliates further the notion that character is always best forged through the raging fires of adversity and pain. It is through hardships, tears and sweat that we realize our untapped potential.

Again you can bet you'll never know how to pick a lock unless you are locked outside. In essence, without obstacles along our path, then the road to success remains too good to be true.

Do you think that the greatest achievers never crawled first before they could learn to walk? They once staggered, fell, rose again holding on an object and just when they were beginning to feel the

energy standing on two feet can charge, they fell again.

They never yielded to these setbacks, so they kept trying, struggling back up, falling again and again but rising with even greater vigor than when they fell. The reason they never succumbed to their woes was because they possessed the undoubted confidence to start again every time and that's how they got to walk straight and still are, walking!

Obstacle? No, a Stepping Stone.....

So it didn't work out despite all the hard work you put into it? Okay, what do you do? Cry? Yell? Find someone else to blame? Do nothing? or try again? With a positive mindset, you already know the answer to this question. You already know what to do to deal with your failure.

Only a coward will try to shift the blame, only a fool will sulk in misery crying and yelling about it, but as for a warrior, this becomes a chance to prove his resilience, perseverance and persistence all at once.

Instead of viewing these setbacks that life throws at you as obstacles that hinder your success, view them rather as timely and as a rare chance to grow, evolve and rise into your greatest calling.

It is these obstacles that drive us to such levels of consciousness, right towards the right path. Again obstacles shouldn't tag along misery or suffering as this only hinders possible growth and

achievement. It is how you deal with them that matters.

So you are on your way to your destiny and you reach this wall that blocks the way there. You have the choice to stop, crumble and sulk in thoughts of impossibilities or you can find a way to climb the wall and continue with your journey.

In essence, you can either keep an optimistic attitude by viewing this as a stepping stone to greater things or rule these obstacles as the culprits for your failure. The choice is all yours!

Soaring High on a Positive Mindset

If there is one lesson that life never forgets to teach us, it is the power of our thoughts. Often times, self talk greatly inhibits on maximum human output. The best way to get what we want and where we want to be is through first changing the way we think and view ourselves.

The things you say about you and think about yourself have such power to either break or build you.

You alone are the master of your destiny and this means that it's not an option to take 100% responsibility of everything that happens to you but imperative.

You need to hold yourself accountable without blaming anyone. Without excuses, take the wheel and make it an initiative to change the odds in your life. Think of your life as a book and yourself as the author. Think of how you would want the story to flow and end.

You see, you may not necessarily have control over what happens in your life but you have the utmost control over your reaction to what happens to you. The best reaction would be to convert self destructive, limiting and negative thoughts into positive and motivating ones. Instead of using negative affirmations like “I am not good enough to do this”, counter that with positive affirmations like “No one can do this better than I can”, “I am simply awesome”. With realistic goals at hand, refuse to stop at anything until you achieve them. Remember limitations and self doubts are a waste of time.

The Aftermath, Happily Ever After

Just like in courtship, the hope lies in being able to build a marriage on this promise of love. It is the hope to persist, the hope to persevere, the hope of resilience and the hope of ultimate endurance. It doesn't really matter how rough or how ground breaking it gets; just keep your eyes fixed on the big prize.

As obstacles charge towards you with renewed energy, counter them with the same momentum even fiercer in resilience and with zeal to overcome. Remember you are not in competition with anyone and the only person to impress and redeem through it all is you. By the end of the day, it's about proving your worth to yourself.

So are you going to rise and soar to becoming the best version of yourself or are you going to allow life's adversity to steal your crown of endurance? Know that with or without liberty to choose between adversity and privilege, life still makes better sense when there are challenges to overcome, dreams to fulfill and milestones to achieve.

To be able to leave a mark of success when all is said and done, to be able to touch on the life of another through your endurance, to be able to scale beyond limitations and life's adversities, to be able to live! Ideally, no one should live their life as if on a threshold, not when everyone remains the master of their own destiny!

Conclusion

Thank you so much for downloading this book.

I hope the content herein has managed to serve as enlightenment towards overcoming adversity. I hope through the tips and in-depth information provided in this book, you will manage to garner more persistence, perseverance and resilience

On that note, if indeed the book has been helpful to you, please do not forget to extend the bliss. It would be sad if someone close to you missed the chance to benefit from the content in this book as much as you have.

Thanks again and good luck in everything!

The Juices

How to Find Your Zone and Unleash Your Creativity

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1. Introduction

Art. That's a term that we meet frequently in our everyday life but do we really know what it is? If you want the exact definition, art is a diverse range of human activities and the product of those activities, or at least that's what Wikipedia says. If you asked me, I couldn't really tell you what it is because I think that there's no absolute answer to that. Art comes in endless shapes and forms and can be found anywhere, from the canvas to the rock and even computer screen. But what fuels this massive engine called Art? The answer is simple-Creativity.

Human kind has always had an enormous imagination and every invention we have today couldn't have come to life without imagination. Our imagination enabled us to picture what we want and our creativity gave us ways to achieve it. The oldest piece of art we found, etched shells made by Homo erectus, date back from four hundred and thirty thousand to five hundred and forty thousand years ago. That's a hell of a long time ago, right? Ancient civilizations such as Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, Mesopotamia, and Rome have all developed a unique and characteristic style in its art.

In the Western Middle Ages, Medieval art was largely about Biblical motifs and religious subjects while in the Renaissance, art had taken a more realistic direction, focusing on the world around them. Modern art has changed in the sense that they revolve around the idea of an absolute truth and sarcasm and irony. Art may have changed its meaning through the ages, but all in all, art is still-art. Man's creativity can be fueled by anything; even the smallest and most mundane things can inspire you to create greatness.

Creativity is even considered a human value. The thing about it is that not everyone has it, no, that's

not entirely correct. To word it precisely, everyone had it but few still have it. Reality tends to choke our creativity quite a bit and the majority of people lose it, they lose that imagination they had as a kid but more about that later. If you think you're one of those who lost it, don't worry, 'lost' means that you just have to find it again and I'm going to tell you how.

This is for all those writers/artists/designers who came across a dead end and don't know how to break free. I will help you with that. Don't worry about not understanding it; it isn't anything complex and most importantly, you don't have to buy any additional stuff. No lotions, pills, creams or belts that suck up our money like a vacuum cleaner. Just pure advice from a fellow writer, artist, and designer. If this helps you in any way, I'll be happy just with that. After all, we creative types have to stick together.

2. Your Ideas and the Powers They Possess

I already said that humanity owes everything to its ability to imagine, to create, and I believe that that's not exaggerating it. To give the most basic example, let's take a look at a chair. Yes, a chair. While creating a chair seems so simple to us now, imagine that you lived in a time when chairs weren't 'invented' yet. You want something to sit on besides the ground and an occasional rock (not that my chair is any comfier than that) and you start thinking on how to do it. Okay, what I need is a platform on which I'll sit, some support beneath, the legs to hold it in place, if I could put something there so I could lean my back on it that would be sweet, all in all, you've got the basic idea of how to make a chair.

Now imagine that you didn't have imagination (I know how silly all this sounds but stick a while before deciding to burn this page), just imagine it. Without it, you couldn't do much. You wouldn't even get an idea on how to do it because ideas themselves spring from imagination. Even when you try to imagine that you had no imagination, what comes to your mind? Nothing. Blank. And that's exactly how it would be if we haven't developed the brain to imagine. While I did use a mundane example to prove my point, I think it did the trick. The guy who invented the chair probably had something like 'One small chair for me, one giant relief for mankind' in mind. I totally ripped off the Apollo with that one but I hope they'll forgive me for the transgression. The bottom line is man's power to create shouldn't be underestimated. It all starts with an idea, a small and simple word play in our minds that we try to turn into reality.

History has taught us that ideas could and have changed the world numerous times over. Any idea, no matter how silly it may sound to you, has something great hidden in it, so don't make fun of people and their ideas because they could do the same to you and you wouldn't want that, would you? Cherish your ideas, work on them, think them through, write them down, draw them, sculpt them, and do whatever you want with them because, after all, they're your ideas. In this time, our minds are largely influenced with the various media that are constantly online all around us and in this vast sea of imagination and creativity; it's hard to think of something 'original'. A word of advice, the weirdest and silliest ideas you get are probably the only ones that haven't been come up with or haven't been come up with end masse. So don't discard them. Don't discard anything because that silly seed of an idea may grow into a masterpiece.

Joanne Rowling, better known as J.K.Rowling and author of the famous Harry Potter series, got turned down by twelve publishing houses in the beginning because they thought that it was silly and look what happened. I bet they're still regretting their decision. Anyway, you get the idea (no pun intended). Cherish your ideas and don't cut them down because you think they're silly. Take care of them and watch them grow.

3. Making Creative Space

Creativity is affected by multiple factors, from how you feel to where you are and it even depends on what's the weather outside. It has a lot to do with atmosphere and your current state of mind. Edgar Allan Poe's works of macabre were the result of his wife's, Virginia Poe, death. The fact that he lived in poverty and had a troubling life reflected on his work, giving it a ghastly atmosphere that is still felt to this day. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm not telling you to abandon everything and go live in a hut in the woods; I'm just trying to explain how our surroundings impact our thoughts.

How to create a creative room? It doesn't have to be anything special. You can work in the bathroom if it suits you. For me that room is my bedroom. I have a desk in there which serves as my creative corner. If you're going to follow the same road as I did and do your work on your desk, I suggest you tidy the place up a bit. Organize stuff on your desk so you know exactly where everything is if you need it. That will save you a lot of time and nerve when working on something. Especially if you get in the zone and you have to break your focus to look for an eraser or something. I must admit that I myself don't quite follow the tidiness rule; my desk is something I like to call 'Creative Chaos'.

Tidying it up can also give you a burst of motivation to do something new as in, my work place is all set to go and now I can delve deeper into my work. Also make sure the room is well lit. Darkness makes you sleepy and slowly sucks the motivation right out of you. Keep a regular

pencil and a piece of paper near you at all times, just in case you get a new idea and want to write it down so you don't forget it. It can be used to just draw or scribble randomly to relax your mind.

Speaking of relaxing, your work place doesn't have to be in your home. It can be pretty much anywhere. In your back yard, on your terrace, in a coffee shop, and even on a simple bench outside in the park. Make sure to take breaks from working. Even though you are doing something you like, creativity can drain you mentally so unless you wish to burn out, I suggest you go outside for some fresh air. Go hiking, ride a bike, run, do some sports, go to the gym, hang out with your friends, go watch a movie, listen to music, take a walk, whatever makes you relax is fine. Taking a simple walk around the neighborhood can do wonders. It will clear your mind and leave space for new and fresh ideas to manifest. Experiment with your chosen workplace; make it as comfortable as possible so you can sink into your imagination without problems.

4. Following Your Intuition and Dreaming Beyond any Limiting Beliefs

The title kind of speaks for itself but I will try to clarify it a bit more. If you create something but you're not sure whether it will succeed or not, if you're getting a good vibe from it, stick with it. Our intuition, if followed closely, can be a perfect cheat engine for us. Imagine if you could tell the outcome of a game based on your gut feeling? Think of all the money you would gain through making the right bets in sports. This might have been an exaggerated example but you get the point, besides, who's to say that it's not possible.

We humans are extraordinary, always doing the unexpected thanks to our ability to create countless solutions to a single problem. Don't be afraid to dream and don't think that dreaming is reserved for children. If you are one of those people who think like that, your life must be pretty bleak then. Dream and keep in touch with your imagination a lot in order to bring color to your life. What does it mean to dream? It means to leave this world, to leave reality behind and do the impossible. Leave everything behind and by everything, I really do mean everything.

Let go of your job, let go of your bills, let go of your friends and family, let go of your beliefs, let go of everything. It's just you and the giant white canvas that is your mind. With an endless palette of colors in one arm and a magic brush in the other, start painting the scene of your dreams. When it's finished, try not to criticize yourself too much. We are our greatest critics and you as the creator will always find some flaw or mistake in your work (I'm saying that from personal experience). It doesn't have to be perfect so don't beat yourself about it too much.

Follow your intuition and follow your dreams no matter what people say about them. Dare to leave all of your beliefs behind in order to achieve something greater in your mind. Trust your instincts and just roll with them. And even if you do fail, it's better that you tried than wondered what might have been later.

5. Working 9-5 Jobs and Staying Creative

Let's be honest. When you are brimming with ideas, going numb at your survival-purposes-only job, mundane just doesn't cut it. I have seen this happen. And I have seen capable individuals crumble under the system, stifling their desire to do something different. The truth is, they could have made it too. They didn't take the initiative. The generations have changed, and while the younger take more risks, exposing the safe haven their parents set up, they often lack the motivation and the resolve to work hard, characteristics that their precedents had an abundance of.

But there are certainly places for these creative individuals to work and develop. In this globalized world, one of the obvious choices of unknown individuals accumulating massive fame and fortune would be the internet. Blogs are personal and surprisingly well paid once the commercials start kicking in. It's a way to express your ideas and vomit everything that is on your mind, with only a few strings attached. Be it a fashion blog, a food blog, a place to post your poetry, it's a little piece of your world that might just pay for the rest of it. You Tube and other broadcasting pages have given rise to many young filmmakers, comedians, or just plain extraordinary talents that may have gone unnoticed otherwise. This is a place that values innovation.

One of the obvious choices for creative establishment is design. Interior design, industrial design, clothes design, it is a relationship between the buyer and the designer exerting a fair amount of

creativity and insight from the designer. This position takes effort, research and ideas. And while this may not give the designer a white slate to work on, it takes a lot of imagination and gives more than enough chances to showcase your take on how much better ‘that thing’ could look.

Writing gives a lot of freedom to a person. You can invent, choose the execution, execute and trim what you have done. It is one ultimate’s work, and once it translates to the public, it is an emotion shared by many. An editor, however, has to have just as much creativity and understanding to find the brilliance in other peoples work. Being inspired every day? It feeds your creativity right back does it not? A reporter, a script writer, a columnist. All of these change people’s lives by choosing what to create and the way it will be presented.

As mentioned before, the film industry is quite expressive and it relies on the audience to exist and spread. If the message translates, the audience will keep watching. And there is always a new way a message can be delivered. An actor, catching the essence of something impossible and making it feel real, has as much to deliver as the movie director moving a perfect picture from his head to the solid ground as a whole.

Making food does not take skills. But cooking does. It is not just about following a recipe. A real cook loves the food, he combines and always works to make his dish better. This asks for resourcefulness, for new ways to combine the known and new uses for old spices. To once coin the term ‘secret ingredient’ initiative and an open mind was needed. And a good pair of taste buds.

These were just a few ways for one to establish oneself, following ambition and ideas. But in the

end, this is a long way to dream. It takes time until one gets to the position where he makes the shots and has the opportunity to use his creative mind to the fullest. Stay firm in your decision and take every job you get seriously, learning and absorbing your surroundings. Remember that many have succeeded in what you are trying to do and the hardest step is the first one.

6. Meditation and Deep Thinking

There aren't many people in this world that practice meditation even though it's recommended from all sides. It serves as a great way to relax your mind and inner senses and just contemplate over what you've done so far. I must admit that I myself don't practice meditation but that doesn't mean that you shouldn't try. I don't do it because I tend to overthink stuff on a daily basis so emptying your mind and concentrating on the blankness of it is somewhat of a chore for me.

Like I said, give it a try. I know people who practice meditation and the results have indeed been shown in their work ever since they started it. I'm more of a deep thinking kind of guy. I like to immerse myself into my world and just think things through so there are no holes in my work. As a writer, you have to do a hell of a lot of thinking on your work if you're going to make it good. Especially if you're writing in the science fiction or fantasy genre. You have to create entire worlds, its history, the races that inhabit it, what do they look like and their history, the characters and the plotline. You might go as far as delving into the politics, the military or/and the schooling system of your new world. The possibilities are endless. If you know what you have to do, it won't be too much trouble.

I advise you write everything down. It keeps you from getting lost in there and getting lost is, trust me, pretty easy once you go deep enough. Thinking deeply about what you want to do can also give you clarity about which steps to take to achieve your goal, thus making it a lot easier. It's a lot better than tumbling in the dark, right?

7. It's OK to be Silly and Not Take Life so Seriously

I've told you before, silly ideas are probably the best ones you'll have and you'll be much happier working on a silly idea than a serious one because of their nature. If you're into hand-crafts and like to build stuff, instead of carving a statue of Zeus out of wood, why don't you build a small catapult that shoots water balloons into your neighbor's backyard? I know what you're thinking. For a moment there, you were probably like 'Why should I build a catapult?' And then, when your inner child came out you were like 'A catapult. Sweet. Don't bother denying it, catapults are pretty awesome in their own right but let's leave them aside for now. Life is too serious sometimes and just accepting it as it is will make you lose your creative side.

Bring some laughter into your life by just doing random silly things. You know the things that other people call childish? Don't worry about them. Some small part of them inside wishes they could join you in building a tree house or something but their obligations restrict them. Or to say it even better, they restrict themselves. Life is too short to go about it with a grumpy face. Smile a lot, laugh loudly, and don't apologize for being happy.

People in general are more prone to be attracted to happy and smiling people than always serious, grumpy ones. Live your life the way you want to and don't succumb to the harsh reality just because the majority has. Tune in to the voice of your inner child and prepare yourself for the ride. All in all, the point is, catapults are still awesome.

8. Abandoning Your Creative Side and Then Rediscovering it

This title may be weird considering that I spent all this time rambling on about how important it is to cherish your creative side and not abandon it but give me a moment and I'll explain myself. Our imagination is infinite but our creativity is not. It has limits. If we take just creativity alone, it is limitless as well but if we put that creativity into a human, it gets limits. Why? Because we put those limits onto ourselves. I understand that it might be confusing but I hope I'll explain it clear enough so you can get it. What I mean to say is, abandon your creative side and start from scratch.

Go in a new direction, learn a new craft, learn to draw, write books, read books, and learn to sculpt. That way, your new creative side will be limitless. The point is that you break your self-inflicted chains and soar through the sky with your wings now fully spread. It will open new horizons before your very eyes and you will get to pick and choose which way to go, without any limitations or restrictions. Another reason why to abandon your current creative side might be because of stagnation. If you work in one field and one field only, you might get spent quickly. Doing the same will improve your skills but it might drain you mentally. If you come across a dead end or an art block in your head, try doing something new and I guarantee that the blockade inside will dissipate into thin air.

One more reason would be for success. For example, if you're a writer and you write in the romance genre and you simply can't catch a break with it. You publish multiple books but you don't quite get the popularity you wanted. What are you going to do? Are you going to stick to it

or are you going to try and find a new way to fame and fortune? Abandon your creative side, re-discover it and go in a new way. Try writing in the horror genre now. While going from cheesy romance to heart-gripping horror is quite a leap, you might just find yourself there.

The same goes with pretty much anything. If you're an artist and you don't get the desired effect with oil paintings, try watercolors, try drawing in digital form or hell, and even try drawing with crayons. If you're a sculptor and you just can't cut it with the stone and marble, try with wood or ice. Some of these may seem bizarre and they indeed are, but remember, there are no limits to your creative side. The only limits that exist are those which we put on ourselves.

9. Experimenting Outside of Your Normal Creative Realm

Experimenting with various things in life is always a good thing. Even if you end up with a bad result, the experience still counts. The same goes for creativity and art. I think I even mentioned experimenting with various other crafts in the topic above. I'm going to delve into that a bit deeper in this topic. I'm also going to provide a personal example on this one too, just because I can. Now sit down and listen to a tale older than Moses. Way back when I was younger, I wanted to learn to draw. I spent hours and hours every day drawing and trying to learn it but to no avail. I have become better at drawing but I didn't reach the level I wanted to reach no matter how much I practiced. I decided to go in another direction then. Writing. And boy, was that a good idea or what?

To begin writing was one of the best decisions I had in my life and it led me to new ideas in my mind. Drawing is still one of my life goals, I still want to reach that point where I can say that I'm satisfied with it but now, I gained a new skill which also allows me to give my thoughts a life of its own. To turn my imagination into reality. And believe me when I say that there is no bigger pleasure than the feeling of accomplishment after you create something with your own two hands, especially if you spent a lot of time working on it. I recommend you try it as well. You don't have to go in the same direction as I did, on the contrary, you can take up writing or photography or even singing (I love singing but unfortunately other people don't love me singing).

There are countless crafts and skills in the world of art, it's like a buffet from which you can pick

and choose what you like and deem interesting. Some may like sitting behind a camera, filming the world around them. Others prefer taking a photograph, stopping time in the world's most beautiful moments. Some may like the feel of a brush in their hand, transferring the image in their heads to the canvas. There are also those who take a giant block of ice and use crude tools to make it a masterpiece. The same goes for the warriors of the quill, creating beauty with every syllable.

For those who have the voice, they can go into the music industry and try their hand (or voice) there. Of course, you don't have to be a singer to enter the music industry. You can also work as a DJ, combining various sounds into music. I could go on and on about this and it would take me an eternity and beyond to say all of the opportunities and directions there are in the world. You can even create a new one for yourself. Who knows, maybe it will become popular? A new direction of art and you will enter history as its creator? Can you imagine that? Imagination is wonderful and is not to be limited by just one craft. Why do one when you can do them all? All it takes is dedication and a will to learn. So, keep on learning.

10. Spending Time with Other Inspiring Creative Types

I mentioned before that socializing will be good for your mind. It will help you relax and make peace in the chaos inside your head. If you have a childish and silly friend, all the better. Besides getting a hell of a laugh with him, you might even get a few good ideas. Or even find inspiration for a new project. You never know.

For example, I went for a drink with a friend of mine, who probably has a few planks missing inside, but hey, don't we all? Anyway, while joking around we came to the idea of a zombie apocalypse. Listen and you'll get it as the story goes on. Are you still with me? If you are, listen closely. As I said, we came across the subject of a zombie apocalypse, or to be more precise, what would you do if the zombie outbreak began? The longer we talked about it, the better it sounded. Soon enough, we had a full story going on for us.

Since I'm keen to writing, I actually began writing a story of what would happen if a zombie outbreak just began. To tell you the truth, it was a blast. It was fun writing about it and it was a nice change of pace. When I showed the end result to that friend, he was thrilled and the story went on. That was years ago but I still have it on my laptop to this very day and I read it from time to time just to get a smile on my face and to remind me why I do all this.

Why do I do it? Because I like it, of course. If you still think that the zombie apocalypse idea was silly, why don't you try it out? Next time you go out of the house, imagine that the zombie outbreak

just began. What will you do? Where will you go? How will you defend yourself? Is transportation available? How and where to obtain supplies? How many zombies are there? And so on and on. You get the picture.

What my little zombie example here tried to explain is that various people around you can inspire you to do great things. You probably have a few creative souls in your company or friend, spend time with them, talk with them, share ideas and thoughts. Besides being able to relax and have fun, you'll also get to know whether your ideas are good or not.

11. Visiting Places That Inspire Your Particular Craft

. If you're an artist, visit an art gallery and take a look how various old and new artists do their work. As a writer myself, I recommend reading a lot of various books to see how other writers formed their work. And that works for all other skills and crafts. You aren't limited to your own particular craft, of course. You can find inspiration anywhere if you open your mind well enough to recognize it.

Luckily, we live in an age where you can find various events around the city every day. Attend any that pique your interest, regardless if it's involved with your craft or not. Why? Because of the experience, of course. The more experience you garner through life, the more accurate your art will be. You'll be more able to portray emotions when you see them on the people's faces, portray nature if you spend time in it, compared to a person who hasn't seen more than three types of expressions and their biggest encounter with nature was a tree in the city park. Who do you think will make a better job at showing what they want? The experienced one, of course.

Let's put it this way; you can't talk about various types of wine if you've only tasted one or two. Life is meant to be lived. There is a quote from Abraham Lincoln that says; "In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years." In translation, go out there and have a blast!

12. How Real Life Can Stifle Creativity, and at the Same Time Inspire it

Real life can be harsh. That is something we all know. Reality is simply like that, but that doesn't mean you can't find beauty in it. We have always tried to bring joy to our lives through various means of entertainment. Art is one of those means of entertainment. It is something we love and cherish. No matter how good and vast your imagination and creative side may be, it's still at a risk of getting harmed from real life circumstances and that is something you can't really avoid.

Life will pound you to the ground as soon as you drop your guard and it is up to you whether you'll get up right away and punch life in the face or curl up in a fetus position on the ground. It has always been up to us and us alone. Some things are just unavoidable and the best we can do is just cope and struggle with them as they pass by. But they will eventually pass by.

First you have to learn to cope with the stress that everyday life deals out and then, the second step would be using that very stress and hardship to your advantage. Find inspiration and motivation in your struggles. Learn to turn frustrating events into hilarious ones and it will make your life a whole lot easier down the road. I'll give you an example from my own life of what stifled my creativity quite a bit.

College. The moment I finished high school and began college, my creativity spiraled down the drain. There was simply too much stuff to do. I had to keep up with my studies and projects while also doing various freelance jobs. Not to mention that I had to keep my relationship with my family, friends and girlfriend in a good shape. There was no time to take a breather and relax. There was always something on my mind, always some problem or task that needed to be dealt with.

Do you know that life pyramid that people on the internet like to post a lot on various entertainment sites? In the first corner there is social life, in the second there is school and in the third there is resting. Of these three corners, you could only pick two. If you picked social life and school, you wouldn't have any time for resting. If you picked social life and resting, your school would diminish. If you picked school and resting, your social life would suffer. I think you know what I'm talking about now. In my case, it was a square with four corners. The same three from the pyramid and plus a new one called 'Work'. The catch was, you could still only pick two corners to do. I picked college and work and naturally, I was tired all the time and didn't see my friends or my girlfriend for a while. There was even one time that barely slept fourteen hours a week. That's about two hours a day. I had a lot more time on my hands but at the price of my health. I was exhausted both physically and mentally. I got everything done though.

Now, now, I'm not telling you to do the same. Not sleeping is very bad for you. Not only is your body at risk but your sanity as well. So, make sure to make time to relax and rest. College is simply something that requires full dedication to it and that isn't going to change. Did I get my creativity back? Not fully. My creativity is suffering a great deal every day but I managed to gain a little bit just by spending a little time on relaxing. Although I operate at less than half of my creativity capacity, I can make do with it. There is always a solution, a way around the problem. Don't give up. If the idea doesn't come to your head, lean back and relax a bit. It will come in due time.

13 . Embracing Failure and Learning from it

There have been a few stories that I always wondered if I would publish. Would I track down the people from these stories, ask them for permission and try to explain how inspired I was? How impressed I was by the very existence of their being? Not by anything they did, but what was done to them; the things they went through by no fault of their own. In a way, they did not do anything, but a mesmerizing air of success just started accompanying their presence, like a sort of fabric softener that oozes from your clothing. Mere words have the power to change how we perceive a person, even to the point where it affects our sense of smell, apparently.

When I was in high school, I have taken part in a few literary workshops, one of which was a part of a bigger festival (read camp) held every year meant to support and develop children's creativity. To elaborate further, children of every age; that would translate to a great group of brats, paraded around by and for the few professionals. This is what I thought in my mature mindset of a healthy teenager. I was quite pleasantly surprised when the people I have met had enough individuality to make the crowd go silent and the mentors pause, or make them all rush with impressions and ideas cause „I know exactly what you meant.“ One of the kids I soon referred to as a friend was a petite middle school girl afraid of bugs. She wasn't a lot younger than me, but she acted energetic and jumpy. All in all, younger than her actual age. In a moment of confidence, she explained how she was at a hospital treating her asthma for a few weeks before camp and went on to explain how her asthma came to existence.

A few years back, this girl had been a few feet away from where a shooting occurred. Finishing music lessons for the day, her dad came to pick her up and she had just gotten in the car when few shots were fired in their direction hitting the car. Since my memory is hazy, I cannot quite recall if the bullet missed the part of the car that once hit, would most likely lead to an explosion, or if the bullet had barely missed her head. Either way, it was a call too close to meet with death, even though she only found out about this afterwards. Despite the fact that she did not find this experience to be traumatizing, her grades started dropping drastically and she had developed the mentioned lung condition.

Later on, they found out that the shooting occurred because of a lost game of chess. Upon ending the game, the shooter pulled out a gun and shot at the running champ, emptying the clip. It was the next evening that I had heard her playing the piano. Luckily, I visited her while she was preparing for the showcase so I had the chance to listen to the music as a whole. She played the piece so fast her fingers looked like they were having a seizure in the remembered positions, the movements etched into the nerves of her fingertips just as the sound was into her brain. Short to say, I was star struck.

I wondered later, what the shooter had missed by taking that flip of the hand and how much he gained by missing her. On that same trip, I had met the Prophet. This kid was around the same age as the girl who plays the piano, but sometimes...sometimes I felt he had years on me. The nickname? I was surprised as well. Before and after I heard this, I always called him by his real name. In the later years, as I was telling others stories about him, I would name him as the Prophet because I felt it showed how unique he felt to me. And selfishly, I felt people would listen more closely if such peculiar names were involved. There is the shameful urge to have your words remembered. (If this is not failure, then what is?). The Prophet had claimed he remembers his past

lives. He had even found books his past self, a German man (a doctor, was it?) had written. I never admitted or denied that I believed him. Perhaps honestly, perhaps ignorantly so, I had always left some matters undecided. I could not decide to be decisive, in a way. And I had a certain fear of one being so close-knit with one's own mind. So while not sure, I left the subject hanging.

I had met the Prophet before knowing any of this, and I had treated him as a friend. For this was odd on my part I presume, he concluded I was doubting him and questioning his motives. I think he had understood what I meant once we had discussed this and accepted my best intentions. At the time, he hadn't had even a cell phone and had written the darkest poetry that could liven up the atmosphere I have heard till this day. But then again, this crowd had a little special something sprinkled on them as well.

A year or so back, when I was done with writing and anything alike this person contacted me over the internet. Avoiding being online as much as the anything I had ever written, once in touch with my friend, I slowly started drifting away after periods of time. He had perceived this as a rejection and decided to once again forsake the internet and myself. Of this, I am quite ashamed. To put things straight, he had the intention to do this before, when I apologized. And I apologized again. And again. And along the lines, my words became as meaningless as the names we call people. For in the same camp where his words were appreciated, the children called him Prophet out of entertainment and in majority most definitely to make him feel wrong about the way he thinks and the way he feels.

Until now and in a great deal the recent years, I had felt that everything I write is a failure. That

the dream I have of writing and creating gets lost in the lack of words, originality and self-worth. But I have come to see that there are some stories I wish to write down. The emotions of these certain moments help me realize that I have indeed realized some things. In order to remember the few decisions I have made for my life I need to repeat them. Again. And again. Until they become as transparent and natural as to make other people fear my close-knit opinions and start to question their own.

Phew, I sure know to ramble on. I don't know how much you got from this story of mine but it's just something I wanted to share. It's just one of countless failures that pepper my life but I've accepted them all as mine. Don't be afraid to fail. If there's one thing I've learned in all of these times I've fell down, it's that failure is the best teacher around. There's really no point stressing yourself more about it. We all make mistakes, we're human after all. Embrace your failures and learn from them so they don't happen again. Every time you fall down in life, rise back up twice as stronger than before.

14. Using Haters and Naysayers as Creative Inspiration

If I were to say that everyone would always be supportive of your work, that would be a lie. If I were to say that no one would ever be supportive of your work it would also be a lie. There are a lot of different people out there in the great wide world and you can never ever please everyone. Personalities clash, someone gets jealous or just doesn't plain like you and says something bad about your work; writing, painting, sculpting, cooking, anything just because they can. People are cruel and they are often cruel just to cause pain.

The thing about creating something from your mind is that you should create it because you wish to create something you find beautiful and not because someone told you to do it - naturally you will find yourself in situations where you are forced to make something then, and this is just a thought, try to make it as aesthetically pleasing to yourself as possible. Creation is difficult but beautiful because in the moment you create something, a feeling of happiness and completions overcomes you and you say 'Yes, this is it. This is what I wanted to express'.

One choice is to keep your ideas to yourself and enjoy them in your own private time or with a group of people that would support even your stupidest idea because they love you no matter what. But if you get the need to share that thing you put so much hard work and energy into creating it, if you do create that one thing that was whirling around your head for ages and present it to everyone, you will soon discover that everybody is a critic. Oh and trust me, you will hear their opinion whether you want to or not. There will be good advice, bad advice, unnecessary

advice and the type of advice that makes you want to choke the person who said it. There will always be haters and naysayers. What are they? Now here is the definition of what are haters and naysayers. The definition of a hater is:

Hater

noun

a person who greatly dislikes a specified person or thing.

"a man hater"

informal

a negative or critical person.

Naysayer

noun

One who denies, refuses, opposes, or is skeptical or cynical about something.— nay-say·ing\-, sā-ɪŋ\ noun.

Basically people would say something bad just because they can say something bad for different reasons such as jealousy, hate, contempt etc. Now there are many ways to deal with them; you can ignore them, talk back or accept them as they are. Here are just a few of the examples I can offer in my own battle with the haters and naysayers.

Reading comments or listening to someone bash your work isn't pleasant, and never will be, but if you manage to keep a cool head and not 'rip them a new one' then congratulations, you managed to be an adult (and a better person). No matter what way you decide to deal with them, my

suggestion is to let them inspire you in your creationism. Use the hate they are dead set on spreading about as your motivation to be better, to improve yourself and gain new skills.

Now I'm not saying you should do it for them but don't allow their thoughts and ideas to make you lose motivation and love for what you create. What my point is that the people who would rather chew off their own foot than say one nice thing about you should never get the pleasure of seeing you down and if they do, then jump back up as fast as you can, and jump back better and stronger than before. These types of people will not be able to touch you if you have faith in yourself. Self Confidence is one of the hardest things to have and to keep when you are met with a wave of opinions that claim you aren't good enough. I would presume everyone can and will find themselves in a moment in their lives where they don't feel so very confident but are forced to deal with a situation that requires it, so always remember that 'Fake it 'til you make it' is always a viable choice.

Also a good thing to point out is that not every critic is a hater trying to hate. Some will give you an idea on how to improve you work and make it easier to show to the greater public. On that note not every hater is a critic and to differentiate between those two is difficult enough without the constant pressure from yourself. It is easy to forget that creativity, making something out of nothing, is a tough job and sometimes if you force yourself too hard the ideas will get away from you. Just letting go sometimes and not thinking about everything you need to do until this and that deadline is a good way to let those creative juices flowing again. Just because some person thinks that your work isn't good enough doesn't mean it really isn't.

Like I said, people are vastly different and personal tastes aren't left to discussion, you may find a

great amount of haters but you might as well find a boat load of fans that are dying to see what you will produce next. Don't miss the forest because you are looking at a tree. Sometimes I find that good old fashioned spite works as my own personal reason of continuing working and pushing on. It isn't exactly healthy but that raging fire that burns deep down that keeps you warm in the middle of the night as you half sob and half scream over your laptop is a pretty good motivator. Many times I've found myself at a crossroad or in front of a giant brick writers block disguised as a wall and didn't give up just because some idiot said he could never picture me writing anything intelligent in my life.

There will be ups and there will be downs but if you keep going and not give up because of other people you will be happy. Happiness can also be defined in many different ways and also comes in all shapes and forms but there is an absolute shortcut to happiness which the majority of people forget – just doing what you like. And that's what I suggest you do.

15. Stop Stressing Over Things You Can't Control

Things are going to happen, whether you want them to happen or not, and there is nothing you can do to stop them. Some things are just out of our reach no matter how much we extend our arms to grab them. There will be events that will harm your work and you can't do anything about it except brace for the impact. I'll use my recent situation for an example.

I was tasked by a client to create a short e-book on a certain subject, nothing too hard, just a simple e-book. I managed to complete it in time and wanted to send it to him but I had no internet, the charger of the laptop wasn't charging it, the lights in the apartment didn't turn on when I hit the switch. That meant only one thing – power outage. The night before that there was a huge thunder storm so I thought that maybe that could be the reason of the outage. And sure enough, it was. After going to the store for some groceries, the woman working at the cashier told me that a few cables on an electric pole got hit by a fallen tree branch that was ripped off by the strong wind and that the entire neighborhood lost power. Thanks to the 'swift' response of our city, everything was fixed on the next day. I managed to send it to him when the power returned but I was past the deadline. The point is that even if everything is going according to plan, there are some things, like the weather, that can't be planned, that will screw you over faster than you can say the word 'lightning'.

Now, in terms of creativity and art, things that you can't control would be the people viewing your work. Art, as I mentioned before, follows a certain trend, a representation of what people

like and seek when looking at art. I'm not telling you to follow the trends as they go by, it's good to stand out, I'm just telling you that if you do stand out, it's going to be a rocky road. When putting your work out there, there are numerous factors that come to play, from the audience to timing and planning. Even if your creativity stands out, it might be a good idea to do one piece of work that follows the trends, just to get your name out there and gather a few more fans. Although, no matter how much time you spend on planning and timing, that's pretty much all you can do. Everything beyond that is beyond your control. Even if you follow all the steps and get the perfect timing, there is no guarantee that you'll succeed. There will always be a little crack in your plan that might stay a little crack or it may expand and break the entire glass.

Now I hope you understand that there are things that you just CAN'T control and since you can absolutely do nothing about it, why lose your head about it? When you publish your work, sit back, grab a drink and relax. No point in doing anything else, you know. I know that relaxing is hard in that situation, trust me, I've been there. But if you don't relax, you'll just wear yourself out and that isn't good. You've been working enough already, use this time to rest a bit. There will be plenty of stuff you will be able to do later. No matter what happens, you just have to remember one thing – keep going.

16. Conclusion

And here we come to the end of the road. Correction, it's the end of the book. The road is just starting for you. Creativity is something within you and you're the master of it so learn to use it correctly. The real beauty of art is that there is no manual for it, no set of rules you have to follow, no one to tell you what to do. You are meant to do it your way.

Create whatever your heart desires and don't be ashamed of your work, no matter what it is. You created it because you wanted to and that is reason enough for it to exist. Even though I did say that creativity is in all humans, only a few have that side in bright lights while the others locked it in behind walls and bars. Being a creative type of person guarantees that you will be misunderstood a lot through your life, most won't see the bigger picture of what you're trying to create and even more of them will laugh at your face because they think your ideas are stupid. Don't mind them; just keep doing what you love.

Learn your craft, master it, so that when you show your work to the world you even make the haters short of breath. You can do it. With hard work and dedication, you can achieve anything. Combine that with love and care and you've got yourself a recipe for a happy life and that's all that matters in the end. Not how many books you published, what the critics said, did your painting enter the art gallery, is your song on the radio, is your sculpture somewhere in the city, none of that matters at the end of the day.

What truly matters is that, when the day finally ends and you recall of all the things you did that day, your head touches your pillow with a smile on your face. And when you wake up in the morning all groggy and sleepy, go outside on your terrace, balcony or through your window and greet the world with a defiant smile on your face. Why? Because you can. Because you, my friend, are an artist. You are – a creator.

Mad at Everything

***How to Control Your Temper, Let Go of Anger,
and Live a Happier Life***

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Introduction

This book will serve as a guide on controlling anger and explain how to find calm and relaxation amidst the raging fires of fury.

While anger is a normal emotion, when it goes unmanaged it can wreak havoc on everyone else's life including your own. Anger management is one of the greatest and most defining virtues in life.

Whenever you are unable to control the fits of anger, the end results are often destructive leading to problems in personal relationships, at work, and overall affecting your entire existence. No one wants to feel out of touch with reality while being controlled by unpredictable and life threatening forces.

Learning how to control your anger allows you to be your life's own master. It is true that the most natural reaction in the realms of anger is often to turn aggressive and that at one point, this aggressiveness helps us to embrace a fighting spirit towards defending ourselves during an attack. So yes, some amount of anger is vital for human survival.

However, the ability to control our anger is what separates us as humans from primitive beings that do not know how to reason rationally. So we know that we just can't go lashing out at every person or object out there that annoys or irritates us. Through common sense, social norms and governing laws, there is the possibility to know just where to draw the line with anger.

Anger can therefore damage your relationships and health when you don't express it at all, if you express it in unsafe ways or if you express it at the wrong time. Overall, it remains imperative to learn how to control your anger such that you don't go causing harm to others when you express it

wrongly or cause harm to yourself when you bottle it up.

Continue reading for even deeper information on anger management and my greatest hope is that you are able to find your calm amidst the realms of anger.

Chapter 1

Think before you speak

Holding your thoughts captive

You see the first thing you need to understand is that with words, you never get a second chance to make amends. Saying things at the heat of the moment and especially in a desperately sensitive situation has such power to only make things worse.

Make therefore the initiative of analyzing your thoughts before actually putting them into words. It doesn't make you inferior if you choose to listen carefully especially when being provoked before saying a word.

Remember they say that it is better to be silent and be regarded a fool, than speak and remove all possible doubt. Holding your thoughts captive during a heated discussion especially is a great resolution when it comes to dealing with anger.

A person that listens is able to control their thoughts and words and is anything but regretful as compared to someone who is quick to lash out in response to anger or provocation. So if you are quick to listen and slow to speak, you will realize that you will always be slow to anger.

Why Be Slow to Speak

There are immense benefits that listening and being slow to anger can sweep forth. Have you ever heard of the saying that goes “Your kindness will reward you and your cruelty will destroy you”? Time and time again, the most defining culprit when it comes to anger is harsh words. They stir up anger so deep while kind ones soothe hurt wounds with as much intensity.

Here are 5 reasons you want to think before you open your mouth:-

- First of all, you are not perfect; it's just as possible that you don't have all the facts on the case.
- Because you are too agitated, you may speak too quickly, saying all the wrong things
- You could be right about the situation but if you don't take time to analyze, you may find yourself using the truth to hurt other people instead of using it to find a solution
- The worst part of speaking amidst the realm of anger is regret. Later on when you are all calm, you will wish there was a way to take back the words said earlier but there just isn't.
- Finally, speaking when angry only reveals your own weaknesses giving the offender a better angle to wreak havoc on you.

Which Words are you using?

Even after you have made the right decision to listen carefully before you ever get to speak, it is important to give emphasis on the words you use when you finally get to speak. For example, when trying to solve a disagreement, the issue is about more than one person, more than just you.

Find a way to avoid centering all else on you but instead, giving the other as much chances to express themselves by using encouraging notions. Ask for their opinion on how they think you should solve the problem at hand and make it feel as a conversation and not a confrontation.

Again, remain positive at all times. While words have such power to either build or break, choose positive words and make sure to use them genuinely.

Regardless of how much wrong the other person has brought upon you, compassion is the utmost mark of maturity and intelligence.

You know better not to hit back because you are intelligent enough to understand that listening doesn't make you the weaker party but instead, it makes you the wiser, the winning party.

Chapter 2

Once you're calm, express your anger

The Inevitable with life

If there is one thing that remains constant in life, it is adversity. It is quite easy to expect life to turn out like that with a fairy tale setting but we all know it is not so. So life is not perfect, in fact, the reality with life is that it is quite messy.

Adversity in life is therefore inevitable, pain and sorrow are also part of life and when everything boils down, there is just no way to rock perfection. So at one point you will get completely stressed and drained from so many external strainers.

Think of the anxiety that builds while anticipating a public speech, job interview, or amidst family emergencies. While so many things can bring forth stress into our life, learning how to remain calm spells the rightful soothing remedy.

You may feel a lot of self-restriction trying to convince you of this fact while dealing with a heartbreak or crisis, but never forget that life is what it is.

Sometimes things will go out of control and instead of complaining, you will need to use this as a learning platform, all these misfortunes can only make you a better person.

However, Don't Bottle it up!

Just because adversity and misfortunes are part of life, it doesn't mean that you are immune to them. Knowing how to counter every challenge that comes your way is vital towards overcoming it.

The same case applies to anger. True, you will need lots of patience and understanding, to wait for the right moment to be able to express your anger, but this doesn't mean that you suppress it, no.

Suppressing anger and indeed the inability to express it can easily provoke some defining physiological and emotional problems. Someone that bottles up anger is one that tries too hard to be perfect.

You can only hold your thoughts for certain duration, ponder on them, but then make sure to express them in due time. It is imperative to express your anger at one point.

Express Your Anger constructively

You see even after you are calm, after your thoughts are well in sync with reality, it doesn't mean that your anger just vanished. It only means that you were wise enough to wait for the right moment to express it. So here we are, offended and in need of liberation. What do you say to the offender?

Conversation- When you are finally calm; propose for a conversation, dialogue to be specific with the offender. Conversation means that you two talk and not that you talk. Allowing the other person to also express their grievances gives way to uninhibited understanding on the same. During this time that you converse, avoid playing the blame game with the other person as this can only breed more arguments and confrontations.

Your choice of words- While trying to express your anger, the worst thing to do is to use criticism to express it. Delivering grievances politely without using loud or harsh words can make the dialogue

subtle.

Not vengeance, redemption- Often, the desire to get even with someone is rampant when we are feeling angry and irritated. This desire for revenge breeds unresolved hostility that eventually grows into becoming bitterness. So instead of seeking vengeance from the offender, seek your own redemption by refusing to pursue revenge.

Assertive expression- As desperately as you may want to punch his sorry ass, remember that violence never built anything constructive in the past. Refuse therefore to express your anger through aggressive behaviors and instead, choose to express your concerns assertively by placing importance on the needs of the involved parties.

Focus on the facts you have at hand and not possible assumptions. Say something that expresses your grievances positively while advocating for a solution too. For example: - “You know, I felt hurt with your coming home too late without informing me, I felt like my feelings were not important to you. Can we talk about it?” This approach shows someone whose focus is on finding the solution and not necessarily feeding their ego.

Chapter 3

Get some exercise

Exercise and relaxation

No doubt exercise has long been known to play a gigantic role when it comes to relaxation and calm. Anger has power to leave you feeling completely worn out and beat. Exercise teaches the body to channel the stress and anger through better channels instead of having to suppress them which can be really destructive.

Past studies have proven exercise to pose beneficial effects on overall health and depression. Given that depression is as a result of blended doses of anger and irritability, it remains a fact that exercise is a great asset when it comes to anger expression.

Through aerobic exercises, we are able to reduce the fits of depression meaning that the same decision to exercise when dealing with anger will also help reduce it. Incorporating aerobic exercises into your daily activities such as running, fast walks, swimming, and bike riding becomes a great plus.

The Breakdown Analysis

According to research, when we are angry, the hormones adrenaline and cortisol are released to help find calm just as in the case of stress where the same hormones can help us elude danger.

Exercise therefore greatly helps in regulation of adrenaline and cortisol levels more effectively. As a bonus, physical fitness also improves the optimum levels of endorphins, feel-good hormones that

make you less likely to feel anger.

A 30 minutes session of daily work out either at the gym or at home is bound to pay up big time.

Consult your physician however in regard to certain vigorous aerobics as they are able to approve on your health to be able to participate.

Think of it as a win-win situation where you will also gain a lot more than being able to control your anger including losing excessive weight and reducing depression.

What Types of exercises?

In essence while any exercise is better than none at all, some exercises however are highly effective in controlling anger than others. Exercise helps breed better re-directed than destructive anger.

Here are exercises one can indulge in when trying to deal with anger:-

Aerobic exercises- These types of exercises involves a set of workout activities that has ability to raise your heart rate. They highly rely on oxygen with immense ability to reduce stress and lower blood pressure. Consider jogging, jumping, running, walking or swimming. These exercises require mild efforts to facilitate not to mention very little financial investment too.

Stationery Exercises

Am sure you are wondering what becomes of you if you are in a condition of physical disability or experiencing chronic pain. Amidst your anger, there are still exercises that you can practice while sitting down including deep breathing exercises. These forms of exercises greatly foster relaxation helping cut down both anger and anxiety.

Team sports

Interaction fosters sharing and likewise, indulgence fosters agility. Participating in team sports encourages cooperation, understanding, resilience and patience. This can greatly help in approaching a moment of anger by choosing to see you as the survivor and not the victim.

Through team sports, we learn to lose with confidence and pride knowing that this can only make us better in future. The same sports helps deal with anger by allowing us to see the other side of the coin, to see the glass as half full and not half empty, to deal with reality, to tap into limitless possibilities.

Chapter 4

Take a timeout

The spectator's role

At the peak of anger while everything seems to be going out of hand, while you are at the heat of the moment, it may seem like a challenge to implement the time-out technique. However, taking a time out from the entire drama can incredibly help cool you down and respectively revamp your overall thinking.

Taking a time out means playing the spectators role. It means that you remove yourself from the drama unfolding, sit back, relax and watch. Doing this is not meant to blow someone off during an argument or belittle someone's opinion; it is simply a healthy option to managing your anger.

No doubt clear communication is greatly affected by overwhelming emotions. A time out therefore helps clear your mind, calm your nerves and prepare you for productive dialogue. ‘

So yes, sometimes it is perfectly okay to play the spectators role with your own life because you see while life is never perfect, someone's just got to snap you out of possible self-destruction and who's better suited for that than you?

Reaction can wait... patience!

Let's say for example that someone sent you an upsetting message or email. It's already too much that

your motivated attitude to check your messages or emails was countered by someone's malicious thinking.

However, while it may seem like an easier option to reply in haste ensuring that you give that person your piece of mind, taking a time out is a better informed decision.

Find something else to do on the same computer, play a video game, proof read something you've been working on, ideally, remove yourself from the annoying situation right now.

It doesn't however mean that you end up avoiding it as when you are all composed, you will need to come back and deal with it rationally. A time out in this case means that you focus on something else besides your anger or this anger provoking issue. This ability to observe patience with the reply helps put your thoughts into clear perspective.

How to Effectively Use a Time Out

Identify the things you can do- If your anger provoking issue arise at home, you can choose to go outside or go to another room still within the same house.

The idea is to walk away from the trigger for just a moment. Given that it becomes harder to think rationally amidst the realms of anger, ensure that you avoid any potentially harmful timeouts such as driving or drinking.

Alert the other person regarding your time out- It could be immensely upsetting to have to walk away on someone in the middle of a heated argument. In fact, while the situation is already unbearable, walking away can end up stirring more havoc, worsening the situation.

Say it is your spouse you are in an argument with, it doesn't hurt to let them know that you intend to take a time out and that once you are calm, you intend to reconnect and finish the conversation. It is important that the timeout be agreed upon for its impact to be effective.

Monitor your anger levels

It is important to take that time out in good time, before you hit rock bottom where your anger might get out of control. The idea is to be able to catch yourself before you engage in hurtful, destructive reactions often triggered by anger.

Increase awareness on the rise and fall of your anger levels and be keen enough to detect that point where a time out deems imperative. Remember taking a time out doesn't make you the weaker party; it only makes you a rational conversationalist.

Take the time out

After you've identified that which you need to do during your time out, move away from the anger-triggering situation. There are inexhaustible ways to calm yourself down paving way to diffuse your anger too.

It's advisable to engage in something fun and enjoyable. If it's in the kitchen where you get your groove back, go in there and make those legendary cookies of yours. If you just love your lawn looking shimmering great, get out there and make it happen.

In essence, whatever it is that help revamp your mood and overall energy, pursue it only making sure to stay away from any destructive timeout ideas.

The come back

Remember to stick to your promise of coming back to finish the conversation. At the time when you feel completely calm, you can just go ahead and propose you finish with your conversation.

Sometimes there is just no way to dictate sense to our emotions so if you find that after a time out you are still pretty heated, take ownership of your emotions and let the other person know that you need more time.

The moment you are finally able to re-engage in the conversation and oversee it to the finish, you will have learnt so much. You learn of patience, understanding and most importantly, the great value that a time out brings amidst the realms of anger.

Chapter 5

Identify possible solutions

Positivity to Overcome.

You see, one of the reasons as to why most people have a really hard time overcoming adversity and other life's challenges is because they allow themselves to harbor a negative mindset.

Try recalling a time in the past where you were so angry at someone that the mere thought of them left you physically shaken. You realize that this feeling of anger rarely ever helps us in getting what we want but instead works tirelessly to wreak more havoc and bring more pain.

With anger and without the utmost understanding of how to deal with it, even the gentlest personality if pushed far enough can easily be turned into a vindictive rascal. However, instead of allowing anger to get the better of you, you can choose to use it as the target emotion towards overcoming.

Dealing with the Monster

Often times, the raging flames of anger experienced in life are very normal, very real and very inescapable. That is the reason why anger remains a natural, healthy response to difficulties and stressful stimuli. It is therefore not a question of whether anger is there but rather, one on how do we deal with its onset?

It may seem a lot more comforting to want to reason that every problem in life has a solution but then in reality, we all know that that is not true. Sometimes the problem is an inevitable, a tag on nature, beyond any human intelligence and power when it comes to its eradication.

Possible solutions to anger

So while trying to solve every problem in life can seem quite frustrating, it remains imperative to learn how to cope, how to endure, how to overcome. You never really get to know just how strong you are until you are faced with adversity. While anger can be a complete monster, know that there is always a way out. Here's how to finding solutions in the desperate realms of anger:-

Better communication- You see one weakness with an angry person is the need to draw conclusions regardless of how far-fetched they may be. If you happen to find yourself in a heated argument, take time to calm down before answering back.

It is okay to feel defensive when criticized but avoid having to fight back as much as possible. Embrace the immense value of listening only having to talk when the time is right. In essence, refuse to allow anger to spin things out of control.

Use of humor- If used without sarcasm, anger has such power to diffuse rage in various ways. When you find yourself fuming mad with fury because someone offended you, instead of agonizing over this hurt, picture yourself as a god or goddess that owns an empire.

Humorous maybe, but just as a prince or princess commands an entire city; you can visualize yourself with such power and majesty to command how things will happen, to get things going your way. You won't be using humor to laugh your problems off but instead to help yourself face them more constructively.

Change of scenery- Often times, it is no doubt your immediate circumstances that provoke anger. Responsibilities and problems can no doubt overwhelmingly weigh you down brewing so much anger and frustrations. Get away from that environment that gets you raged and try out more relaxing

sceneries.

You see if you continue being in the same environment that provokes anger you are only allowing more of it to accumulate, and this now becomes a huge threat to those around you. Take for instance someone who is raged by driving, when he persists on taking his rage on the road, he is not only putting himself at risk but others too.

Additional information

Sometimes your fits of anger may get so out of control that they become immune to the natural remedy through enduring and overcoming. In this regard, a psychologist or any other licensed health professional (mental) holds the next possible strategy towards controlling your anger.

Through the use of evidence-based treatments, these specialists are able to help you improve on your life and overcome most of life's adversities.

Chapter 6

Stick with 'I' statements

Avoid the Blame Game

Every time you are engulfed in nauseating anger, it is easier and most convenient to see the faults in the other person while presenting yourself as a god or goddess. Whether it is a personal or formal relationship, it is important to learn how to refrain from judging or placing blame on others.

Negative life experiences during childhood can leave us on the defensive when we are grown adults. These defenses may lead us to feel vulnerable having to trust or open up to other people. Because of this fear of the unknown, we find that we inhibit our potential from thriving by being too defensive we try to paint a perfect-picture of ourselves.

This inhibition leads us to view ourselves as perfect while being too critical of others and dwelling too much on their flaws. So don't try too hard to prove yourself as being right and the other as being wrong but instead, take a breather and focus on that which is important. Focus your energy on solutions other than agonizing on already spilt milk.

Own up, It Doesn't Belittle

It is never easy to admit that you are wrong and that the other one is right. In fact, it takes immense courage to swallow your pride and accept defeat. Amidst the realms of anger, one way to overcome is to take responsibility without trying too hard to blame other people.

Healthy anger needs to be justifiable in that it gets you feeling so strongly about an injustice that

you'll want to correct it but it shouldn't be defensive that it gets you feeling as the victim.

If you look more closely, you will realize that many of your anger fits comes from guilt, pain, humiliation, intimidation, vulnerability and helplessness. Given that anger is a more comfortable feeling to feel as compared to guilt and other vulnerable feelings, you find that it is a lot more easier to substitute these feelings with anger instead of owning up to them.

This in reality is not dealing with the problem but avoidance. Using anger to shield yourself from hurt, vulnerability and guilt with time becomes a harnessed art that is difficult to abandon. This is now when anger becomes self destructive and vile as we constantly use it to criticize and judge others while placing ourselves on a pedestal.

Know however that what you resist only persists. You continue to harbor unresolved feelings which in the long run becomes not only self destructive but also threatens everyone else around you.

Learn therefore to own up to your anger as this is the first steps towards dealing with the monster. You don't have to completely own up but how about taking partial ownership with the hope of meeting your counterpart half way down the journey.

The use of “I Statements” to find solutions

Nothing helps breed positivity and calm as being able to state your case without necessarily arousing the other person's defenses. In every healthy conversation, the use of “I” statements is more productive than when we use the “You” statements.

Someone approached using the “I” statement regardless of how intense and intended the approach is will no doubt react less defensively than someone approached with a “you” statement.

For instance let's say you are trying to express your grievances regarding the issue bringing you anger and frustration and you say something like, "You always come home late and we rarely ever have time to discuss our family issues".

This kind of approach is likely to leave the other person feeling defensive, unfairly blamed may be and it is very unlikely that they will positively converse with you.

On the other hand if you had chosen to use the wealth of "I" statements to express the same grievances, you would witness an entirely reverse outcome. You could say something like, "Hey, I am feeling a little concerned that we haven't really had time to discuss various family issue lately, may be if you could make time one of these days".

With both of these approaches, you get to point out your concern regarding him neglecting family affairs. However, while the first approach places the entire blame on the other person, with the second one, you attribute as much responsibility for the stressor.

The use of "I" statements make so much difference in how someone is likely to react as it demonstrates a certain willingness to take responsibility for your own feelings and perceptions.

Chapter 7

Don't hold a grudge

Quick fixes are a waste of time

It often feels easy to advocate on letting go but when it comes down to action, this is a route most people often avoid. What you don't understand however is that if we don't let go, the baggage of resentment keeps piling up to a point where it affects not just us but everyone else around us.

Ask yourself this question, “When last did you experience overwhelming happiness, gratitude and freedom?” If indeed you cannot remember, then it could be that you've been holding onto resentment too long to the point you've become resolved to unhappiness.

Interacting with other people is bound to breed misunderstandings, arguments and respectively anger mainly because of the fact that none of us is perfect. So you find that you are always trying to evolve quick fixes to soothe such moments of rage and anxiousness with our thoughts and actions.

However, while these self acclaimed fixes are only temporary, this move allows the root cause to wander free so it continues to fester and worsen until we just cannot take it anymore.

The power of letting go

Think of the liberation that comes from knowing that there is a permanent, long lasting means of feeling less angry and fearful with the hope of eventually gaining utmost control of your emotions.

Letting go works by considering anger, fear and resentment as an umbrella package. That we often get trapped in the self-obsessed cycle of fear of the unknown, anger with the present and resentment over the past.

Many are the times we want to snap out of resentment, stop holding a grudge and live free in the present without the past injustices and hurts having to occupy so much clairvoyant space in us.

Grudges comes with clear identity of something bad that happened in the past, how someone wronged us in the past and it's easy to think we will need this identity to protect ourselves from more harm in future.

However, this misconceived quest for identity is not just self destructive but it also keeps us from living above such misfortunes, hurts and offences. You therefore need to stop making this about the offender and start making it about you. What makes you happy? What brings a smile on your face?

It beats logic why anyone would still want to continue holding a grudge while the only thing this can achieve is to work against what you really want in life. Why would you want to keep revamping past wounds?

Self love as a catalyst

While the past could be so deeply engraved into your utmost existence, to overcome, you will need a lot more than just the desire to beat anger. That you get to understand that the freedom emanating from letting go of a grudge is not as much through forgiveness, but self love.

That you are able to bring unreserved self-love into the equation means that you have too much compassion and dedication to yourself that you refuse to allow mediocre reasoning, your mediocre reasoning to sentence your potential to destruction.

You will need to vow solidarity to your well being and refuse to let anything hinder you from upholding this commitment. No one stands a better chance to help diffuse any anger you may feel right now than you do. With self-love, there are no boundaries or limitations because you are willing to go all the way for you.

So love yourself enough to want to free yourself from the chains of resentment and grudges. Choose to scale beyond life's limitations by seeing the glass as half full and not necessarily half empty.

Will you then work to liberate your soul from self-destruction by letting go of past resentment or will you allow bitterness and anger to poison every possible chance of happiness and freedom today?

Chapter 8

Use humor to release tension

It can't be so bad

Every day we come across the most life threatening situations which if we are not careful with carry as much weight to hold us down. Ever heard of the phrase that goes “Laughter is the best medicine”? While stress has long become a health threatening hazard over time, finding just the right way to breed relaxation can be liberating.

Humor is meant to evoke laughter which therefore helps in relaxing your muscles, increase oxygen flow in the body and lower the blood pressure.

In addition, laughter also stimulates the immune system greatly counteracting the negative effects of stress. It doesn't necessarily mean you laugh out loud because remember that this move is unacceptable in certain countries.

Amidst the clouds of mishaps and stress, how about you find it timely to laugh at yourself, your mistakes especially. This makes it easier to relieve stress of a situation which eventually allows you to view the situation in a lighter perspective.

The complementary plus with laughter is that it allows you to place some distance between yourself and the problem, a move that makes it easier to find a solution. So the next time you have a problem or are in a strenuous situation, how about you try the amazing liberation that incorporating humor

brings forth.

How to use humor

Are you thinking of how hard it's about to get trying to tickle your funny bone? Maybe you feel that you lack the "IT" factor when it comes to humor but truth be told, everyone in this life has their own sense of humor.

However, it remains imperative that you be able to discern between humor and sarcasm because at times, our efforts trying a bit too hard to bring out humor can instead breed sarcasm which no doubt hurts feelings and worsens situations.

Humor becomes an asset amidst the realms of anger when it's able to help you face the monster and any unrealistic expectations you may have regarding how things should be. Here are various ways you can use humor as a stress reliever:-

Reading a funny book- Yeah, so you know if the "Vile bodies" by Evelyn Waugh doesn't tickle, how about Charlie Brooker's legendary piece "The Screen Burn"? Anything that has ability to provoke laughter, read it!

Television Comedies and Cartoons- Just like the days of kindergarten know that you are never too old to fancy some hilarious cartoon on T.V especially when using this to beat anger. There's always some good comedy recorded on film or live that has power to tickle your softest spots.

Telling jokes- True, taking the initiative to narrate comedy yourself is one risky business especially when dealing with a multitude but then again, you only need a second party to crack a joke so why not crack it up with a colleague or spouse, someone that is more likely to acknowledge your humor effort.

Will You Allow Anger to Control You?

You see, how a situation that angers you works out is highly dependent on whether you allow humor to take charge or allow your anger to escalate. You'll be surprised to learn just how hilarious most of these anger episodes actually are if only you'd take the time to notice.

Humor advocates for the refusal to take yourself so seriously. This way, you'll be surprised to learn just how much humor lies underneath the contempt and anger that you've harboring and more so, to learn that you can be the sole master of your life and emotions too.

Humor can therefore be relied on every time to help diffuse a tense situation as it does take a lot of the edge off your anger.

Now that you know that managing your anger cannot come from suppression, you also know that introducing humor to potentially difficult situations is a great way to anger expression.

Chapter 9

Practice relaxation skills

The Hassles and Bustles of life

Stress in life remains unpredictable with so many culprits responsible for disrupting everyday's peace. You find that while some people have learnt to tame their stress, for others, it spirals so out of control to the point it controls their emotions too.

With the demanding lifestyle there is today, relaxation to many people is considered more of a luxury than a necessity. However, learning how to simply relax as a form of anxiety and stress reduction is a key tactic towards a more fulfilling life.

In order to enjoy life and its fullness, it is important to experience both relaxation and stress in life. Most people however miss out on this vital balance between stress and relaxation without knowing that it is the only way to find contentment in life.

The Good and the Bad Stresses

In life however there is both the good and the bad stresses. Think of the kind of stress that comes with becoming a parent, getting married, moving house or starting school. These are no doubt short-lived moments, good stresses and worthwhile to be specific.

It is quite vital to learn to balance between both the good and bad stresses through relaxation where we are able to optimize our overall life experiences, health and potential. This therefore means there is the dire need to listen to what your mind and body is telling you and learning exactly when and how to relax.

Though the cause of anxiety will not go away, through relaxation, you feel more fueled to deal with the situation once you've cleared your thoughts and released that tension in your body.

Don't be concerned if you are unable to initially relax, this is a skill that needs to be learnt and re-learnt through practice. Ensure therefore that you pursue those activities that helps activate the body's natural relaxation response

Again, it is important to incorporate quality relaxation techniques because you see, while you may easily refer to zoning out in front of your flat screen TV as relaxation, this move does very little to relieve the life threatening effects of stress.

The Various Relaxation Techniques

It is quite impossible to evade stress and stressful situations; in fact, it is only natural to consider stress as a complementary ingredient to a fulfilling life. With stress comes anger, an emotion that is both inevitable and necessary.

So while you cannot avoid stress, you can instead counteract it by learning how to practice the relaxation response a direct opposite of the stress response. This is a response that draws the limit on stress bringing your mind and body back to the state of equilibrium.

Activating the relaxation response means that your heart rate decreases, your breathing becomes more controlled, muscles relax, blood pressure stabilizes and overall, your body begins the healing process.

In addition, the relaxation response also increases focus and energy, relieves pain and boosts overall productivity and motivation. Here are a variety of relaxation techniques that zaps stress and anger fast:-

Deep breathing

Take about 5 minutes break to focus on your breathing. On an up straight sitting position, eyes closed and one hand on your belly, slowly start inhaling through your nose as you feel your breath start in your abdomen and working its way to the top of your head. The plus with deep breathing is that it slows the heart rate, lowers blood pressure hence countering possible effects of stress.

Meditation

The thought of practicing meditation provokes possible feelings of calm, serenity and bliss. Anger in its own is a great poison and meditation is therefore designed to extract the poison of anger from our system.

Meditation is therefore a timely asset when you are dealing with anger fits as it helps you find closure between this thought of anger and possible impulsive action led by the same thought. It allows you time to step out of the angry situation and think clearly of the next best action.

Presence- Take time to focus on each and every one of your cognitive behaviors with deep awareness. Slow down. Do you notice how your skin feels when the breeze washes past you or how your feet feel hitting the ground as you walk?

You could be eating, relish on not just the texture but also the taste of each bite you take. When you choose to live in the moment, focus on all your senses, you relieve both tension and anger.

Chapter 10

Know when to seek help

No man is an Island

So while anger is a normal emotion, the same emotion can lead to a reduction in our inhibitions causing us to act inappropriately. Anger management is therefore vital as it helps recognize the onset of anger as early as possible bringing the possibility to express these same frustrations and feelings in a calm, cool and collected way.

Again while there are inexhaustible techniques to anger management, sometimes the anger we experience may be so defining that even these techniques deems ineffective. Without wanting to burst your bubble, even with so much self efficacy, there are impossible signs to ignore when dealing with resilient anger.

It doesn't mean you are weak or that you succumbed to anger the moment you admit it's beyond you and seek help. Know that as a human being you do not thrive in isolation but rather through exposure.

Find value in sharing your concerns with someone else, discussing your woes with a friend can be helpful. This retaliates better the need to build a strong social support network in advance long before anger or adversity cave in.

Seeking advice and help from a close and trusted confidant may help you get a completely different perspective of the situation.

Seeking Professional help

Still sometimes even after observing such positivity, possible relaxation techniques, sharing, exercise, relaxation and any other self-help approaches, you may find that the vile of anger still continues to poison everything around you. It is at this point that it deems inevitable to seek the help of a specialist.

A professional physiotherapist is in just the perfect position to guide you on the best action to take at this point of confusion. In this regard, there are immense helpful counseling and anger management courses you can undertake.

Anger management therapy is meant to help reduce anger arousal by allowing the affected individual to explore the triggers and underling issues with angry outbursts. Respectively, this helps recognize and accept present anger issues, understand how you can use anger in a healthy way especially while trying to cope with grievances and injustices. Therapy on anger management teaches you to detect frustrations early so they can be resolved in a calm, controlled manner.

However, it is vital to ensure that any therapist you consider is registered under a professional organization to avoid falling prey to amateurs.

What an Anger Management Program involves

Depending on your needs, you can either expect a typical anger management program to involve participation in small work groups or a one-on-one counseling session with the specialist.

The therapist works to address specific types of anger issues including adolescence, parenting, relationships or work using such therapeutic methods as mindfulness and cognitive behavioral theory.

The focus of any management therapy is to help in:-

- Identify what triggers your anger (why you get angry)
- Changing how you respond to anger triggers
- Teach you valuable skills to effective anger handling focused on calm amidst the surge of anger
- Teaching you how to have your needs met in an assertive, healthy way
- Teaching you effective communication that helps resolve conflicts and defuse anger

Spotting a Good Psychotherapist

In essence, there are no specific characteristics that outline a reliable psychotherapist or counselor. Still it is imperative to ensure that your therapist is capacitated in the area in which you are seeking help.

Asking for recommendation from someone who has used the services of such a specialist in the past helps source for both a reliable and quality therapist. Remember when it comes to your overall well being, you just cannot afford to place your health in the hands of an amateur.

Overall, consider asking for help if your anger fits seems to be out of control, hurts those around you or causes you to do things that you regret. Remember there is no harm in asking for help, instead, it shows you are strong enough to admit it and positive enough to pursue a fulfilling life!

Conclusion

Thank you so much for downloading this book.

It is my sincere wish that the content herein will manage to serve as enlightenment when dealing with anger and stress.

I hope through the tips and in-depth information provided in this book, you will encounter a life-time experience with peace and calm and how I hope that this marks the end of needless worry and rage fits.

On that note, if indeed the book has been helpful to you, please do not forget to extend the bliss. It would be sad if someone close to you missed the chance to benefit from the content in this book as much as you have.

Thanks again and good luck in everything!

Thank You!

I wanted to start off by just saying thank you for choosing to read one of my books. I know there are millions of other books out there and how valuable your time is, so I am extremely thankful that you took the time out of your day to read my book.

I wanted to also quickly explain to you that you are actually getting 8 additional books from me within this one book you purchased! I have included many of my books that I currently have available on Amazon at no additional cost to you. I wanted to give you all of these bonus books as my way of saying thank you to you!

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